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THE SEVEN
HEROINES OF CHRISTENDOM.

THE SEVEN HEROINES OF CHRISTENDOM.

BY

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MARIE ANTOINETTE," ETC. ETC.



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THE SEVEN HEROINES OF CHRISTENDOM.

WOMEN are often spoken of as if timidity were so completely a part of their nature that it would be altogether unreasonable to expect in them that courage, the want of which is in all countries reckoned disgraceful to man. But such a notion not only shows a failure to appreciate a very beautiful part of the female character, but is also so utterly at variance with general experience and many well-established facts of history, that there is scarcely any nation which does not preserve among its most cherished traditions memorials of female heroism displayed under a great variety of circumstances.

It is true indeed that women, being weaker in body than men, do not so commonly exhibit or feel that reliance on personal strength which

makes men feel a delight in strenuous exertion, or court encounter with hardship and peril ; and which renders them eager to stake their own safety and honour, or, it may be those of their friends or of their country, on their own personal prowess. Yet it would be more correct to say that the courage of women is different in kind from that of men than that it is greatly inferior in degree. In the endurance of pain and suffering ; in patience under anxiety and sorrow ; in firmness under privation and indignity, they have often displayed a resolute fortitude which few men could do more than equal, and which the hardiest could not surpass. And seldom as, from the difference of their ordinary avocations, it must necessarily have happened that they have been called upon for the exertion of a more active boldness ; yet where a call for such has been made upon them in the discharge of duties which some strange emergency has summoned them to fulfil, or in the maintenance of rights which it would have been shameful to abandon, they have met such demands with as keen a sense of honour as the boldest men ; they have confronted even the dangers of war and battles with willing and

unshrinking bravery; and have often overcome them through their own firmness and resolution; setting, even to those men who shared their labours and perils, an example of steady courage in which their masculine comrades have cordially recognised a kindred, at times even a master spirit.

And the instances of such heroism as the present volume records, few as they are, may also serve to prove that the possession of these great qualities is confined to no country, to no class. They have been found in the daughters of the voluptuous regions of the South as well as among the more bracing climes of the North. Queens and nobles have not been so enervated by the delicacy and luxury of their education as to prove less enduring and intrepid than the peasants whose youth was passed among scenes of roughness and hardship; but in their several turns, as emergencies have arisen, women of all ranks and of all nations have displayed virtues and performed actions which have won for themselves an undying fame and, in not a few instances, have conferred permanent benefit on their respective countries.

JOAN DARC,
COMMONLY CALLED JOAN OF ARC, THE MAID
OF ORLEANS.

THE most terrible scourges which the folly or wickedness of man can inflict upon a nation are foreign invasion and civil war. And at the beginning of the fifteenth century France was visited by both these calamities. The king, Charles VI., had fallen into a state of idiotcy, and that misfortune, which ought to have united all his family in support of his throne, did, in effect, only sow among its members the seeds of jealous dissension and long protracted enmity. For many years the royal palace was the scene of the most nefarious crimes. Cousins plotted the death of cousins; it was even believed that mothers prepared poison for their sons. The very sons of the monarch were neither innocent nor safe, but were

in turn the contrivers and victims of treacherous assassination.

And, while these miserable intestine divisions were at their height Henry V. of England revived the claim to the French crown which had been advanced by his great grandfather Edward III., and, though it was utterly destitute of any foundation in justice, supported it by landing in France at the head of an English army. To their everlasting dishonour some of the French princes countenanced his enterprise, as if they preferred the supremacy of a foreign sovereign to that of the prince who, though the lawful heir to the throne, belonged to the rival branch of their family. And aided thus by these unpatriotic and wicked divisions, Henry gained at Agincourt a victory even more decisive than those of Crécy or Poitiers, and finally extorted from the French councillors a treaty¹ by which they agreed to give him the Princess Catharine, the king's daughter, in marriage; and to recognise him as the heir to the French throne after the death of Charles VI.

Henry himself did not live to profit by this

¹ That of Troyes, concluded in 1419.

treaty: but died in 1422, leaving an infant son, who at once became King of England, and who, when a few weeks afterwards his grandfather Charles VI. likewise died, was, in compliance with the recent treaty, proclaimed King of France also, and received the homage of a large party of the princes and nobles of the land and of the citizens of Paris, who sent a deputation over to England to swear allegiance to a foreign master. But another party maintained the claims of their legitimate sovereign, the eldest son of the late king; and set up his standard in the southwestern provinces.

War, therefore, at once broke out over the whole kingdom; foreign war as against the English, and civil war as against the French partisans of the English prince. But, as the English had before proved equal to the whole French nation when united, it was not to be expected that they could be resisted by one-half of it when the other half was on their side. And accordingly they made steady progress, gaining more than one brilliant victory, capturing several important cities, and gradually establishing their supremacy over all the northern provinces; so that by the

end of the sixth year of the war Orleans was the only city of any consequence between Paris and Bordeaux which remained to Charles; and in the autumn of 1428 the English commander-in-chief, the Earl of Salisbury, laid siege to that, confident that its reduction would terminate the war. It was at this crisis, when all the valour of Charles' soldiers and all the skill of his generals had proved unavailing, and when he seemed to have scarcely a hope left of preserving his own lawful inheritance and his country's independence, that it pleased Providence to send deliverance to him and his people from a most unexpected quarter.

Among the most violent partisans of King Henry was the Duke of Burgundy, though he was one of the nearest kinsmen of King Charles. But his father had been assassinated by Charles's contrivance and in his presence; and the Duke regarded the exaction of vengeance for his death as an imperative duty. His sister, too, was married to the Duke of Bedford, the uncle of Henry VI. and Regent of his dominions during his minority; and Bedford, who was a prince of great

virtue, courage, and ability, had therefore little difficulty in persuading him to espouse the side of England in the quarrel. The Burgundian nobles in general shared the views of their duke; but though Lorraine also was a part of the duchy, the inhabitants of the western portion of that province entertained different feelings, and considered the right of Charles to his father's succession too sacred to be annulled by any treaty. As being nearer to the seat of war, they had also a keener sense of its horrors than the people of more remote districts; its chief incidents were watched by them with peculiar interest, and each success of the English was regarded by many as a personal calamity. The clergy of the different villages in many cases fostered these feelings; denounced the English supremacy as the coming of Antichrist; and, occasionally warming into prophecy, predicted a divine deliverance for the oppressed people of France.

Such preaching at such a time, adding as it did religious enthusiasm to patriotic excitement, was well calculated to make a deep impression on its hearers. And on no one did it work more strongly than on a young peasant girl, the daughter of

John Darc, a shepherd of the small village of Domremi, near Vaucouleurs. The natural character of the place rendered the villagers particularly open to superstitious influences; for Domremi contained a medicinal spring, whose virtues were attributed to fairies, who haunted the grove in which it arose: and, besides that women are naturally more prone to yield to such enthusiasm than men,* there was a reason at this time why women should take a special interest in the affairs of the kingdom, because, some years before, a woman named Mary of Avignon had come up from the south to Blois, where Charles held his Court; and, declaring herself to have been favoured with a vision from heaven, had announced to him that a young girl should deliver France from its enemies.

The intelligence of the prophecy reached Lorraine; and the belief in one such visitation, not unnaturally awakened a proneness to look for similar manifestations of the Divine will. Joan, who from her earliest childhood had exhibited a disposition at once serious and ardent, had followed the preachers with enthusiastic attention, and had often been found in the churches offer-

ing up secret prayers to the saints to come to the succour of France. It is hardly to be wondered at that after a time she began to see visions herself. To give her own account of what happened: "At first she only heard a voice, most beautiful and gentle, which called her by her name, saying, Joan the maid, child of God, be good and virtuous, frequent church, have trust in God; you must go to France."¹ On a second occasion she was granted a sight of the speaker. She saw, "girt with a bright cloud and surrounded by a company of inferior spirits, a winged figure of majestic countenance, who declared himself to be the Archangel Michael; who had come to her, to command her on the part of the Lord to go to France, to the aid of the Dauphin,² in order that by her assistance he might recover his kingdom."

When he visited her the third time he brought

¹ In that age the people of Burgundy and Champagne confined the name of "France" to the ancient Duchy of France, distinguishing the other provinces by separate names, such as Normandy, Brittany, Guienne, &c.

² Charles was called the Dauphin, as not yet having been crowned king.

with him two female saints, "crowned with rich and precious diadems, whom he announced as St. Catharine and St. Margaret;" and who had been commissioned to be on all occasions her guides and counsellors.

At the present day a belief in such visitations would be regarded as a mark of ignorant superstition. But in the fifteenth century few even of the learned ventured to question their occasional, if not frequent, occurrence; and Joan, who was sprung from the humblest class, had had none of the advantages of education to raise her above her fellows. To her these visions were an undoubted reality. To quote her subsequent description of her feelings, "she saw the saints with her bodily eyes as plainly as she saw" the judge whom she was addressing. For the next three years they visited her with increasing frequency, exciting her more and more strongly, till all her conversation was of their appearance; and one of them reiterated the injunction, "Go to France, and save the kingdom."

Her parents became alarmed, and sought to find her a husband. But she had resolved to be the bride of none but the Church; and, while they were endea-

vouring to combat and overcome her inclination, a battalion, advancing to take its share in the war, burnt and sacked Domremi on its way. She saw in the destruction of her parents' home a token of God's anger at their opposition to the saints' commands and an injunction to herself to delay no longer. "The voices" of the saints had of late become more imperious; they no longer said "Go," but "Hasten," and presently news came that Orleans was besieged, and that the cause of Charles had become almost desperate.

She fled to Vaucouleurs, and obtained an audience of Robert de Baudricourt, a knight of good reputation, who was the governor. She announced herself to him as "the maid of whom it had been prophesied that she should save France." "My Lord," she continued, "to whom the kingdom of France belongs, has ordered me to go to the Dauphin, to conduct him to be crowned, so that he may become king in spite of his enemies."

"And who," said the governor, "is your Lord?"

"The King of Heaven." De Baudricourt thought her crazy, and dismissed her with pity, half amused and half contemptuous. When, after a few weeks, he learnt that she was stirring up the citizens

and had brought many to believe in her, he began to fear she might be a witch, and desired his chaplain to exorcise her. But the priest found his ordinary forms of proceeding fail so completely that he too began to fear lest he might be fighting against God. The belief in the reality of her visions was spreading rapidly among the people, and at last de Baudricourt thought it best to report her case to the Court, and to ask for instructions how to treat her. So great had become her reputation for sanctity, that, when the prince of the district was attacked by a fever, he sent to her to inquire the means of recovery; but she replied that "she had no mission on such matters; the only duty imposed on her was to save France." And her firmness had its reward. De Baudricourt received orders to send her to Chinon, where, at the beginning of 1429, Charles was holding his Court, and the whole town of Vaucouleurs entered into the joy with which she prepared to obey the royal summons.

As the journey was long, and one which could only be performed on horseback, it was decided that she should assume the dress of a man; and the governor and the chief citizens vied with

one another in the zeal with which they contributed to her equipment. One burgess gave her a well-quilted jerkin, another supplied a horseman's boots. Her own kinsmen bought her a horse; de Baudricourt himself provided her with a sword; others engaged grooms, and an archer to serve as a guard, and six knights of the district eagerly pressed a request to be allowed to accompany her as an escort. Some of the citizens, less confident, let fall some expressions of pity for the dangers to which she was about to be exposed, but her reply, as she spurred her horse on the road, was, "Pity me not; it is for this that I was born;" and in this spirit she went boldly on her way.

Meantime the Court at Chinon was greatly divided in its views respecting her. Charles himself, a prince of very little judgment or resolution, was usually led by some favourite or other; and, as commonly happens with such princes, chose his favourites among the most worthless of his subjects. But the less they deserved his favour the more they valued it, and, though often jealous of one another, were for the most part disposed to unite to resist any one who might establish a new

influence over his feeble mind. The courtiers urged upon him her low birth; the warriors the impossibility of her having any means of checking the progress of the English arms; the priests revived the idea of her owing every power which might be given to her to witchcraft and Satan. The king's mother-in-law, Yolande of Aragon, herself a queen, as widow of the King of Naples, and a woman of high spirit and great political sagacity, was at first her only partisan. Whether she really believed in Joan's pretensions may be doubtful, but she could appreciate the power of religious enthusiasm; and it was so evident that all the ordinary resources of resistance to the foreign enemy had failed, that she judged that it could not but be wise to have recourse to this, which seemed to be the last expedient for safety.

She therefore urged Charles to admit the Maid to an interview, and to judge for himself. He consented, but thought to test the reality of her mission by disguising himself. To his astonishment, though he had dressed himself in apparel studiously plain, while his courtiers around were decked out in more than usual splendour, the

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moment that she entered the presence chamber she walked straight up to him and fell at his feet in an attitude of the deepest submission. "Her voices" as she said afterwards, "had revealed him to her." He bade her address herself to the most stately of the surrounding company, telling her that that was the king. "In God's name, gentle prince," she replied, "it is you, and no one else, who are king. Gentle Dauphin, I am Joan the maid, sent to you by God, who has been moved to pity for you, your kingdom, and your people." And presently, at a more private audience, she made him a revelation of some circumstance which he had hitherto believed to be so secret as only to be known to himself and God.

Whatever his opinion had previously been, this proof of her supernatural knowledge which he conceived her to have given, removed all hesitation from his mind. He openly proclaimed his belief in her tale and her promises; and when it was seen that, unused as she had hitherto been to any intercourse with her superiors, she moved among the courtiers and nobles with a grace and dignity equal to their own; and that in exercises in the park she displayed a perfect skill in the

management of her charger and in the use of arms, her accomplishments of these kinds produced an almost universal impression in her favour.

The last to yield were the clergy, and to satisfy their doubts Charles consented that she should be examined at Poitiers by a conclave of divines. In more than one conference with them she displayed an acuteness and readiness which baffled her adversaries and filled the spectators who thronged the hall with admiration.

At last, when all the questionings of the doctors had failed to confuse her, they required that she should prove her title to belief by giving them a sign. "She had not," she replied, "come to Poitiers to give signs. Let them follow her to Orleans, and there she would show them signs. Let them give her soldiers, many or few, as they might choose; she would compel the English to raise the siege; she would conduct the Dauphin to Rheims to be crowned; and, after his coronation, she would re-establish him in Paris." The doctors themselves confessed that her manifest sincerity had dispelled their doubts. A bishop pronounced sentence that she was undoubtedly sent by the Lord, and the only contest now

left was who should contribute most zealously to forward her on her expedition.

She did not deceive herself as to the dangers and sufferings which awaited her. She predicted to Charles himself that she should more than once be wounded, but neither slain nor disabled. And when he began to furnish her with arms, she declared that the sword with which she was to conquer was one which mortal eye had not seen, but which was stamped with five crosses on the blade, and lay buried deep in the earth behind the altar of St. Catharine, at Fierbois. The sword was found as she had described it. A banner was worked for her, on a pattern with which, as she affirmed, "her Voices" had supplied her. The field was pure white, besprinkled with golden lilies; in the centre was a figure of the Saviour, seated on His throne, holding the world in His hand, and supported on each side by an angel in an attitude of adoration. The motto was: "Jesus Maria." And when all the preparations were completed, on the 27th of April, the Maid, clad in complete armour, girt with St. Catharine's sword, and bearing her standard in her right hand, set forth from Blois at the head of a small

brigade of soldiers, with which, and a supply of provisions, she undertook to reinforce the now sorely distressed garrison of Orleans.

Her company did not consist of soldiers alone : at the head of it marched a body of priests, chanting psalms and hymns ; and her addresses to the rough warriors were not such as they were accustomed to hear, but holy exhortations to confess and renounce their sins, and to join her in receiving the sacrament.

Though thus equipped with all the appliances of war, her Voices enjoined her to offer the English peace before she proceeded to smite them with the sword ; and, in obedience to her heavenly guides, as she approached the city she sent forward a herald to the English chiefs, bearing them a letter, in which she called on each, Bedford, Suffolk, Talbot, and the rest, by name, "to submit themselves to the King of Heaven, to give up to the Maid, as having been sent by God Himself, the keys of all the cities which they occupied in France, and to withdraw from the land." Threats of defeat and slaughter if they resisted were mingled with promises of mercy if they submitted, and at the back of the

letter was endorsed the warning, "Hear the word of God and of the Maid."

The summons was disregarded by the English chiefs; but the knowledge of her advance, with all its strange attendant circumstances, her pretensions to a divine mission, her miraculous sword, the company of chanting priests, which gave her progress the appearance of a sacred procession rather than the march of an army, were not without their effect on the bulk of the besieging host, as open to superstitious influences as these of any other country. And so fully were they imbued with a dread lest, in fighting against Joan, they might be fighting against the higher powers of Heaven, that their generals feared to lead them out of their trenches to encounter her.

The river Loire, deep and rapid, lay between the road which she had taken and the city; but Dunois, the most illustrious of the French leaders, brought boats for her and her vanguard. It was he indeed who had contrived that she should advance by that line, lest the English, whose camp lay on the other bank of the river, should arrest her progress; and she did not adopt his plan without sternly rebuking him

for his distrust in Providence. "The counsel of God, my Lord," said she, "is surer than yours. I am bringing you the best succour* that ever city or army received, the succour of the Lord of Hosts." But, having thus reproved him, she embarked in his boats, and with two-hundred men, and a sufficient portion of supplies, crossed the stream and entered the city; while the rest of her troops proceeded onwards by the river-side to find a bridge.

But, slight as was the force with which she was as yet attended, the citizens and garrison of Orleans hailed her entry as if her presence alone were sufficient to ensure their deliverance. The same evening she repaired to the cathedral to offer up her thanks at the altar of God, and to implore the continuance of His protection; and on her way through the streets she was followed by a vast multitude of every age and sex, shouting and weeping for joy, "exulting," to quote the words of a contemporary chronicler, "as if they had seen God himself in bodily presence descending among them."

The rest of her brigade had so far to go before they reached a bridge that four days elapsed before

they rejoined her; and till they came Dunois positively refused to attack the besiegers. She was indignant; but was forced to yield to his authority. The time, however, was not thrown away. A second summons which she sent to the English commander was indeed only met by contempt, and insult so foul and bitter that the Maid wept on receiving it; and, as if by inspiration, she declared that Sir William Gladsdale, the captain whose language was the most arrogant, should not live even to see the defeat of his comrades. And on both the garrison and the besieging host every hour of delay wrought its effect. The one force grew in confidence as the other lost heart. As the same old chronicler describes it: "On one side brave men seemed changed into women; on the other, women were transformed into heroes." Before the Maid arrived, two hundred English could put to flight a thousand French. After she entered the city, five hundred Frenchmen thought themselves strong enough to encounter the entire English army."

And there was little exaggeration in this description. When, a day or two after her entry, the rest of her brigade arrived, the English, though far more numerous, made no effort to check their

advance. And from that moment the garrison became the assailants, and the English, in their redoubts, the besieged instead of the besiegers. She gave them little respite. On two successive days she headed sallies against the enemy's works. She struck no blow herself, but bore in her hand her standard, and not her sword; so that she was able to boast afterwards that she had never once slain a man. She seemed as if she felt equal pity for the victims on both sides. If one of her own followers was wounded, she declared that the sight of a Frenchman's blood made her hair stand on end; and when an Englishman was struck down, she wept to think he should die "without confession."

Dunois had doubted the prudence of these operations, and recommended the waiting for further reinforcements; but she over-ruled all his objections. "You," said she, "have your notions, and I have mine. Your plans are the plans of men; mine are those of God, and they will prevail." And her confidence was justified by the event; both sallies were successful. The English redoubts were taken. One shot killed Sir William Gladſdale, thus accomplishing her pre-

diction that he should not live to see the repulse of his countrymen.

And in the final combat, which terminated the siege, another of her prophecies was similarly fulfilled, since she herself was struck down with a deep wound in the chest from an arrow. But even that misfortune was turned, in her eyes and those of both armies, into an additional proof that she was under the protection of the Almighty. For a moment she fainted with anguish ; but, presently recovering, with her own hands drew out the arrow ; and, after a brief rest to dress the wound, she remounted her horse, shouted out to her followers that the Lord had delivered the English into their hands, and once more led them on to the attack. The next day, the 8th of May, only ten days after she had entered the city, the English generals raised the siege and retreated, leaving behind them their baggage, their guns, and a vast number of wounded men. Dunois would fain have fallen on them as they retired ; but she refused to permit it. Their flight, she said, was sufficient. And she ordered that, instead, the whole army should collect round an altar, which she caused to be erected in the square of the city, to hear mass and return thanks to God as the giver of victory.

But, decisive and glorious as was the success which she had achieved, it was, as she felt, but a small part of what was to be done, and only valuable as a token of future triumphs. And she at once quitted Orleans and returned to the king, to entreat him to trust himself to her that she might conduct him to Rheims, the city in which the kings of France were always crowned. Charles was at his palace of Loches, near Tours, and as she went she found that the fame of her exploit had preceded her everywhere. From every village on her road the whole population poured forth to greet her, happy if they could get even a distant glimpse of her, happier still if they could approach near enough to receive a word of salutation. Those who could reach her kissed her hands, her clothes, or even the print of her charger's footsteps, till she began to fear that they were paying her such honours as belonged to God alone; and sought to direct their homage where it was due by admonishing them that she herself could have done nothing if God had not protected and strengthened her.

Charles, however, was not of a disposition to feel enthusiasm such as hers, or even to profit by

that of his subjects, which she awakened for him. It was in vain that she implored him to go to Rheims and receive his crown. He preferred taking counsel with his ministers and courtiers, one half of whom were afraid for themselves and the other half were secretly jealous of Joan. She would have been almost in despair had not her "voices" been constantly at hand to whisper words of comfort in her ear. All she could obtain was a small reinforcement of troops, and leave to attack some of the towns around, which were still occupied by the English. She lost no time, but at once marched against Jargeau; where, if the annalists may be belived, she displayed a high degree of scientific knowledge, and herself selected the positions for her battering cannon with a judgement which shamed the most practised artillery officer. She herself led on the stormers. As at Orleans, she was severely wounded; but also, as at Orleans, she was irresistible: the English garrison capitulated; the Earl of Suffolk himself became her prisoner. And she moved on to Beaugenci, where Talbot, the most valiant of all the English leaders except Bedford himself, commanded. Talbot retired before her; and, pressing on, with great

rapidity, two days afterwards she reached Pataye, where Talbot had halted, and had drawn together his different divisions with the resolution of giving her battle.

At the sight of Talbot's army there was great alarm among the French, for there was no instance of a French army having held its ground against Englishmen in an open field. And even the Count de Richemont, the Constable of the kingdom, was not ashamed to give utterance to his fears. "Are your spurs all good?" was the Maid's reply to such doubts. "We are then to be ready to flee?" he asked. "No; those who flee will be the English: and we shall need our best spurs to pursue and overtake them. We shall conquer without loss. My 'voices' tell me that the Lord gives them into our hands."

The battle was fought on the day which, in the present century, has been made illustrious by the most important triumph ever gained by English arms, the 18th of June, the day of Waterloo; but on this occasion there was no honour in store for them. Joan's promises were verified. After a brief resistance the English, panic-stricken at the idea that Heaven was warring against them, fled

in disorder, leaving Talbot and many of his bravest officers prisoners to the victorious Maid. She hoped, as she well might, that this decisive triumph of a new kind would remove Charles's hesitation; and once more she returned to him to beg him now at least to march with her to Rheims. As before, the vile and jealous courtiers opposed her counsels, though they could not prevent him from at last promising to join the army. And, when he reached the camp, it was no longer possible for him to refuse to proceed further, so enthusiastic and unanimous were the cheers with which the whole army demanded to be led to Rheims. He could no longer resist; and when he had yielded, it seemed to Joan that no other resistance or delay was to be feared. In her exultation she even sent a herald to the Duke of Burgundy to urge him to break off his alliance with the enemies of his land and race, and to come to the coronation. But the duke could not yet forget his wrongs and his father's murder.

She hastened forward and reached Troyes; but that great city, the capital of Champagne, kept its gates closed against her. And the bishop sent Brother Richard, a friar of most renowned sanctity,

to test by fresh proofs whether she were really a messenger from Heaven or an agent of Satan. Richard approached her, making the sign of the cross and sprinkling holy water. She accosted him with a smile: "Come on boldly; I shall not fly away." He conversed with her a short time, and returned to the city to proclaim her perfect holiness. But the garrison was unconvinced, and obstinate, and the courtiers, as if they preferred to see the country still enslaved by foreigners rather than delivered by her, sought to take advantage of this stubbornness, and besought Charles not to expose himself to the dangers of a siege, but to retreat to a place of safety.

The matter was long in debate in the king's council, when suddenly Joan demanded admittance, and promised Charles that, if he would persist in the siege, Troyes should be his in three days. "I would persist," he replied, "if I were sure of taking it in six." "To-morrow," said she, "you shall be master of the city." And again she made her words good. She took the command herself: at her orders the soldiers filled up the moat with faggots and brought ladders to scale the walls. The citizens who were watching on the ramparts

saw legions of spirits, in the form of white butterflies, hovering around her head; they rose on the English garrison; drove it out, and sent deputies to implore pardon and mercy from Charles. And so, passing through many towns and fortresses which received him gladly, at last, on the 10th of July, he came in sight of Rheims. 16265

Rheims was a strong city, and the governor was a Burgundian knight, resolute in his purpose of resistance; but the citizens drove him out, and sent Charles the keys of the city gates. And on Sunday, the 17th of July, in less than three months after the Maid had set out on her march to Orleans, Charles was solemnly crowned King of France in the grand cathedral, and was anointed with oil from the sacred phial which, as tradition declared, a dove had brought from Heaven to St. Remi for the baptism of the first Christian monarch of the nation. Joan's eyes and thoughts were fixed solely on him whom till now she had only greeted as the Dauphin, but to whom henceforth the title of king could no longer be refused even by his enemies. But in the view of the multitude which thronged the cathedral she herself was the principal figure in

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For the moment, and while she remained at Rheims, she was regarded with enthusiastic admiration by all classes, which showed itself in every variety of manner. The nobles and knights laid aside their armorial bearings to assume standards made in the pattern of hers. The ladies wore medals stamped with her image on their necks. The priests introduced collects in her honour into the service of the Church. The power of working miracles, and even of raising the dead, was attributed to her. And Heaven itself was believed to testify its visible approval of her by sending a legion of cavaliers, robed in white and mounted on white horses, to hover over her as she rode along.

Nor was her fame confined to her own country. By some foreign princes she was regarded as gifted with supernatural wisdom ; by others as endowed

with superhuman authority. A Spanish prince sought her decision as to which of the rivals who at that time claimed the papacy was the legitimate pope. An Italian, who asserted his right to be regarded as the heir of the Visconti, implored her, as the representative of the King of Heaven, to establish him in the Duchy of Milan ; while some more enthusiastic spirits urged her to renew the enterprise of St. Louis, and, when she had expelled the English from France, to lead an army to Palestine to wrest the Holy Sepulchre from the Infidels. Such a crusade might well have been expected to have a powerful recommendation in her own heart, so entirely absorbed by religious aspirations. But as yet her uniform reply to all questions, entreaties, or counsels, was that for the present she was sufficiently occupied with the affairs of France. She did not look on her work there as fully accomplished till she had re-established Charles in his capital.

But, strange and shameful as is the story that remains to be told, her past exploits were so far from making easier what remained to be done that they only increased her difficulties. She had more than once declared that she feared

not so much the resistance of the enemy as the treachery of those on her own side, and had warned some of her warmest partisans that whatever she had to do must be done quickly, as she should not be permitted to last a year. And the very completeness of her success now emboldened those courtiers who had always viewed her with jealousy to redouble their efforts to get rid of her. They urged on the weak and ungrateful Charles that now, since he had been recognised as king by his coronation, he had no longer need of supernatural aid. It was to no purpose that Dunois and the other captains who had fought by Joan's side at Orleans and Pataye, gave her their support at the council board; or that the whole army now joined her in the war cry, "to Paris," as before it had re-echoed her exhortation, "to Rheims." The royal favourites and the king's chief minister, La Tremoille, overbore her influence. Had Charles marched on Paris when she first urged the step, he might have recovered the great city without resistance. But, though at last he consented to advance towards it, his movements were so slow that he did not proceed more than six miles a day; and, on the 24th of July, was resting at

Soissons, when the Duke of Bedford, in person, brought a reinforcement of four thousand English archers to the Paris garrison.

The courtiers redoubled their mischievous industry. They even induced the king to make a truce with the Duke of Burgundy; and would have prevailed on him to return to Chinon, had not the English occupied the bridges over the Seine, by which alone he could march. Joan had announced that from Rheims she would conduct him to Paris; and they hoped that if she were seen to fail in fulfilling this promise she would lose her influence. She was almost in despair. "Would to God," she was heard to say, "that she could lay aside her armour and return to her parents to keep their sheep, as she had done before." But that much longed-for home she was never fated again to behold. And presently she was cheered by fresh hopes. As he was unable to cross the Seine, Charles was at last compelled to march upon Paris. And at Senlis, Bedford seemed as if he were resolved to bar his further advance, and to give him battle.

All Joan's enthusiasm revived; the very ground on which the English army stood seemed one of

good omen for the French; since it was there that Philip Augustus had founded the Abbey of Victory, in honour of his great triumph of Bovines. And she did not doubt that again the day of battle would be a day of glory to France. But Bedford did not seem inclined to fight. He had strongly fortified his camp, and remained unassailable in his position. It was in vain that Joan tried to provoke him to battle; that with her banner in hand she rode down to his very trenches, and planted it on the summit in token of defiance; and that, though the French were inferior in numbers by two thousand men, she sent him a herald inviting him to come forth from his lines, and promising that her army should fall back to give him space to plant his batteries. He dared not trust his men to encounter her, but preferred the safer plan of relying on his secret friends in Charles's council. His faith in them did not deceive him. Presently Charles fell back to Compiègne, and then Bedford returned to Paris, where it seemed as if the unworthy king were willing to allow him to remain unmolested.

But his retreat before the gallant challenge

of the Maid had given greater spirit than ever to the French party. City after city returned to their allegiance to Charles, sending their keys "to the king and the Maid," as their magistrates expressed their purpose. Her own hopes revived; and, at last, when she found all her entreaties to Charles himself useless, she addressed herself to his captains, begging them to arm their men and accompany her to Paris. "She vowed that she would at least see the city."

The whole army caught fire from her resolution, and, without waiting for the king's permission, gladly marched on at her command. As she approached, St. Denis opened its gates to her; and she could boast that she was now within sight of the capital, where the citizens were so eager to join her that Bedford despaired of being able long to keep her out. With the choicest of his English soldiers he quitted the city, leaving its defence to a small Burgundian force, which even its own commanders did not think equal to the contest which awaited it.

Nor, had Charles but been true to himself, had he possessed either kingly honour or manly courage, would any force which England and Bur-

gundy together could have collected have sufficed to prevent her from becoming at once master of Paris. He alone was his own enemy. It was to no purpose that Joan and the brave captains who still stood by her sent him message after message to beg him to advance, assuring him that if he would but show himself at the gates the whole city would receive him. At last, a fortnight after Bedford had retreated, he did come as far as St. Denis; and when he came it would have been better if he had remained away.

Evil omens had warned Joan of impending danger. Her holy sword had broken in her hand; but at the sight of her king in front of Paris she dismissed all forebodings of danger, and at once prepared to lead her soldiers to the capture of the city. The prospect of success had brought such numbers to her standard that she had now twelve thousand men; and on the 8th of September she herself led them to the assault. The outposts of the garrison fled before her. With her own hand she planted a ladder against the wall, and summoned the governor to surrender. He, a Burgundian soldier of fortune, reviled her in reply with foul ribaldry. But though his brutal

abuse wrung tears of shame from her eyes, she pressed on undauntedly, never ceasing her efforts till she was again struck down by a severe wound. But even while lying on the ground in anguish she continued to cheer on her followers, and to send message after message to Charles, begging him only to show himself and the city would be his.

His answer was to order a retreat. The soldiers bore her back in safety to the camp; and the next morning it did seem for a moment as if the fulfilment of her most sanguine promises could no longer be delayed. In spite of her wound she was again on horseback urging a renewal of the assault, when the gates of the city were thrown open, and the Baron de Montmorenci, the most illustrious of the French nobles who had hitherto given their allegiance to Henry of England, came, attended by a splendid cavalcade of chosen knights, to make his submission to Charles. The only use the spiritless King made of this unexpected good fortune was to issue a peremptory order to raise the siege, and withdraw the whole army to the Loire.

* The base favourites and courtiers had done

what the Dukes of Burgundy and Bedford united could not have effected. They had kept the king out of Paris. They had consigned the whole kingdom to twenty-nine more years of war. But they had gained their own object. Dunois had before reproached them with preferring that Charles should not triumph rather than that he should owe his triumph to the Maid; and at last, when all the resistance of the foreign enemy had been overcome by her, they had defeated her, and caused her mission to fail. It is not without reason, that the most recent historian of France¹ has said, that "in all modern history no crime against God and the country has been committed comparable to this of Charles and his favourites, just as there is no grandeur comparable to that of Joan Darc."

She now gave up all hope of further success. She laid aside her armour and consecrated it, in the cathedral of St. Denis, to the Virgin and the Saint; and at St. Denis she proposed to remain herself, since "her voices" enjoined her to remain there under their protection. But the gallant knights and captains who had fought by

¹ M. Henri Martin, l. xxxvii.

her side, and who would not yet abandon the hope of rousing Charles to a sense of what was due to his people, implored her to remain with the Court, and to watch for some favourable opportunity of regaining her influence. She complied; though she did not disobey "her voices" without deep misgivings, she would not abandon the hope that she might yet be allowed to save France. But the hope was vain. Those who fight against themselves do not deserve to be saved. A truce was made with the Duke of Burgundy till Easter; and when Joan endeavoured to rouse the monarch from his shameful inaction, his advisers sought to elude her remonstrances by heaping honours on herself and her family. Patents of nobility were made out for her and her father and mother; coats of arms were designed by the heralds for her brothers. Joan cared not for such honour, and asked no reward for herself. The only recompense for her labours which she ever solicited was the exemption from taxation of her native village, Domremi; and that it enjoyed till the leaders in the fatal Revolution of 1789, with an infamy even below that of Charles's courtiers and councillors, swept it away,

with every other ancient privilege and memorial of noble citizens and virtuous actions.

Once during that tedious winter she was permitted to head an enterprise, and to attack the fortress of St. Pierre le Moutier, which was held by an English garrison. It was perhaps hoped or designed that the attempt should prove fatal to her. For the garrison was stout, and her own followers were seized with such a real or pretended panic, that she had scarcely a comrade by her side when she reached the top of the ramparts. "Back, Joan, back!" shouted one of the officers; "you are alone!" "I am not alone; I see around me fifty thousand of my attendants. Bring ladders, and mount the walls!" The ladders were brought, and the place was taken; but the treachery which would have betrayed her then was not exhausted.

The truce with Burgundy ended at Easter, and the duke resolved to signalise the renewal of the war by the capture of Compiègne. Joan hastened to the succour of a place so important. She knew that she was going to meet danger, for "her voices," still vigilant, had warned her that before St. John's Day she would be a prisoner; but she kept the warning secret within her own.

breast, only, as she afterwards related, entreating them, "her brothers in Paradise," to spare her a long captivity, and to release her by an early death. She reached Compiègne. Its defenders had been in despair, so superior were the besiegers to the English and Burgundians in number. She resolved at once to attack them in their trenches, as she had attacked the English before Orleans. But habit had diminished the fear with which they had at first regarded her. They met her stoutly, far outnumbering her force, till at last her followers turned their backs and fled towards the town. She had no choice but to fall back also ; but even while retreating she fought resolutely, like a lioness at bay. The greater part of her followers had gained the town, but she was still outside, striving to beat back their pursuers and to secure the safety of all, when suddenly the governor let down the portcullis. Her retreat was cut off ; and seeing her at their mercy, as it were, the enemy pressed upon her with redoubled vigour. The few of her own men who had remained with her soon fell. She was surrounded. They seized her charger by the bridle. One assailant tore her banner from her hand. Another, bolder still, caught

her by the cloak, dragged her out of the saddle, and bore her off as prisoner to his chieftain, John of Luxembourg, one of the fiercest of all the partisan chiefs of Burgundy. Her "voices" had proved fatally true.

It is a miserable and shameful story that is now to be related. Hitherto the English had fought against her as honourable enemies. It would hardly be fair to say that even by their repulse before Orleans or their defeat at Pataye they had lost their honour, so irresistible in an ignorant age is the power of superstition. They had yielded, not to the valour of man, but, as they believed, to the will of God. But it was an act of foul baseness to take vengeance for their discomfiture on a woman; and the fate of Joan is a stain on the memory of the Duke of Bedford, not the less indelible that it is shared by John of Luxembourg, the Duke of Burgundy, and some of the French prelates. As a prisoner of war, by all the laws of war, she was safe. Such were sometimes ransomed, sometimes were dismissed without ransom; and courtesy towards such was held to be among the first duties of a noble knight. But despair of the power to maintain his nephew on

the throne of France led Bedford, brave and noble though he was, to forget his knightly honour, and even his manly sympathy with the brave in misfortune. He determined to revenge himself. And though, as we have seen, the divines who had examined Joan had pronounced that

“The light which led her on
Was light from heaven”—

others, headed by the Bishop of Beauvais, had been at all times jealous of her influence, and they now charged her with heresy and sorcery, and demanded that she should be brought to trial as an agent of the devil.

We will not linger over scenes of cruelty and wickedness. John of Luxembourg sold her to Bedford, and at Rouen, the city which was the principal stronghold of the English, she was consigned to the mercies of an ecclesiastical tribunal. For some time it seemed as if the utmost malice of her enemies would be defeated. No subtlety of question could elicit any proof of guilt. She owned indeed that she had been guided by her “voices,” but that she had believed herself inspired by God ; and she could appeal to the divines

who had examined her at Poitiers in proof that that belief had been well founded. Forty times was she brought before the judges. Her faith could not be shaken, nor her plain good sense perplexed. It remained to try and break her spirit. She was confined in a dark dungeon, heavily fettered, and then, still loaded with chains, she was brought to a chamber where the executioner was already in waiting, with all his too well-known engines of torture. It was decided, she was told, to torture her first, and afterwards to burn her. Such a fate might well appal the stoutest heart. The very gaolers pitied her, and begged her "to have pity on herself, and not to cause herself to die." And at the prospect of such agonies her firmness gave way. She consented to submit to the Church and, if the Church should decide that her mission had been unholy, to abjure her errors. But even this submission did not procure her release. It was treated rather as a confession of guilt, and on the 24th of May, the anniversary of the day on which she had been captured, she was sentenced, "by the grace and moderation of her judges, to perpetual imprisonment, to the bread of sorrow and the water of anguish, that she might weep for

the sins which she had committed, and might commit no more."

But even this condemnation to life-long misery was insufficient to appease the revenge of Bedford. That could only be satisfied by her death. And the wicked ingenuity of the prelates easily found a pretext for gratifying him. By the laws of their vile tribunals there was no pardon for one who, after being once found guilty, relapsed into his former errors, and among the offences which Joan had been ordered to renounce was her masculine attire. At first she had gladly resumed the dress of her sex ; but her gaolers, who quitted her neither day nor night, were coarse English soldiers, and more than once she was heard to sigh for her man's apparel as a protection against their rudeness. The victim was now made ready. On the fourth day of her imprisonment, when she woke from such brief slumber as she had been able to snatch, she found her woman's garments taken away, and her male attire placed by her bedside, if, indeed, the hard board on which she lay chained could be called a bed ; and at the same time she was ordered instantly to dress herself, and to prepare to receive a visit from her judges. She

resisted the command as long as she could, but at last she was compelled to submit, and she had scarcely arranged her clothes when her judges entered the dungeon, and at once assailed her as having relapsed. She pleaded, and, as they well knew, truly, that if any one were guilty it was not she, but her gaolers, who had removed her female garments. But it was the lamb arguing with the wolf. In reply to further questions, she did not deny that since her sentence she had again heard her "voices," and that they had reproved her severely for consenting to allow a doubt to rest on the reality of her heavenly mission. "And indeed," she added plaintively, "God did in truth send me. And it was only from fear of the fire that I said what I did say."

The judges had now all that they required. A fresh court was held, at which they reported her as having relapsed, and on the 30th of May she was awakened by Martin l'Advenu, a Dominican friar, who announced to her that she had been condemned to be burnt, and that the sentence was to be instantly executed in the market-place of the city.

Few will wonder that, on the announcement of,

so horrible a sentence, she fell into an agony of despair; that she tore her hair, and with piercing cries appealed from her unjust and pitiless judges to the just and all-merciful God. It is stranger far, if such fortitude be not in itself a constant companion and proof of innocence, that after a few minutes of internal conflict she recovered her composure, knelt at the feet of the Dominican to make her last confession, and mounted with firmness the car which was to convey her to her doom. So touching and calm was her resignation, that some even of the judges, the inhuman Bishop of Beauvais among them, are said to have been moved to tears. And when she asked for a cross, one of the English archers appointed to guard the scaffold, moved by pious pity, carved one for her out of a broken arrow, that the sight of the holy emblems might comfort her in her last agonies. As the executioner applied the torch to the fatal pile, strength and courage returned to her; and, as the Dominican afterwards bore testimony, with her latest breath she affirmed that her "voices had not deceived her; that her revelations had come from God, and that all which she had done she had done by His command."

Among the innocent victims whom the cruelty and superstition of bygone ages have at times consigned to the cruellest of deaths, there has not been one more pure-minded and spotless than the maiden whose glory and whose miseries we have here related. Among the patriots who have laboured and bled for their country, there has not been a more dauntless or unselfish hero. We are not indeed bound to believe all her story as she related it herself and believed it : that God wrought miracles in her case ; that she had been the subject of prophecy before she was born ; or that the voices which sounded in her ears were really those of St. Catharine and St. Margaret, permitted to revisit this earth for her guidance. But though we may agree that on these points she was the sport of delusions, yet the enthusiasm which excited her was a holy enthusiasm, the end to which it led her was a sacred end ; for such may well be called the duty of delivering one's native country from the tyranny of the foreigner.

And though the reward which while in life she reaped was but humiliation and agony, the balance has been redressed since, and her brief period of shame and misery has been compensated by cen-

turies of honour. The very generation which saw her perish witnessed the commencement of the reparation made to her memory. Twenty years had still to elapse before the English armies were finally expelled from France, and then, at last, Charles, who had so basely sacrificed her, began to feel shame and remorse for the share which he had had in her misfortunes. All the proceedings of the court by which she had been condemned were formally reversed. Her innocence was proclaimed in every city in the kingdom. A cross of honour was erected in the market-place at Rouen, on the very spot where she had been fastened to the stake. The most skilful artist in France was employed to cast a statue intended to represent her figure, which was erected on the bridge of Orleans, and a festival was appointed to be yearly held on the anniversary of the day on which the English had raised the siege of the city, and to be called the "Feast of the Maid."

In that fearful revolution which swept over France in the last century, the statue was deliberately destroyed; and in the war which those who then held sway in the land waged against all the ancient traditions and glories of

the country, the festival also could not escape abolition. But the present venerable Bishop of Orleans, one of the brightest ornaments of the Roman Catholic Church, has replaced the statue, the magistrates have revived the festival, and it may perhaps be said that one of the best omens for the future of that distracted country is the zeal and unanimity with which all classes now vie with each other in honouring the memory of the Maid of Orleans.

MARGARET OF ANJOU.

NOR altogether unconnected with the war in France, of which the transactions mentioned in the last chapter were an episode, was the history of Margaret of Anjou, the consort of that Henry VI. of England who was still but a boy when his uncle and guardian, Bedford, pursued the unhappy Joan to her death. Though the son of one of our most warlike sovereigns, Henry VI. had no point of resemblance to his gallant father. He had neither the wisdom of the statesman nor the prowess of the knight. On the contrary, he was meek, if not timid, in disposition; while, as he grew up, he even gave evidence that he had contracted some taint of the weak mental constitution of his French grandfather, and, like him, was subject to long fits of derangement and imbecility.

Such a constitution would be unfortunate for any

prince, but it was especially so in his case, since the acquisition of the English throne by his grandfather, Henry IV., was regarded by a large portion of his subjects as a lawless usurpation. It was notorious that it was by base and treacherous intrigues that the founder of the House of Lancaster had procured the deposition of Richard II. and his own enthronement in his stead. And it was undeniable that there was another prince of the family of Plantagenet who had a better right to be regarded as the head of the royal family than the present occupant of the throne.

That prince was Richard, Duke of York, who was descended from the third son of Edward III., while Henry only represented the fourth son of that monarch. And the Duke of York's character for ability and virtue was such as to render his pretensions formidable to any rival. After the death of the Duke of Bedford he had commanded the English armies in France, and he had won the esteem both of his own countrymen and even of the enemy by the skill with which he had long upheld a falling cause. When he was removed from France, to undertake the still more urgent duty of quelling a rebellion in Ireland, he showed.

equal vigour in putting down all armed resistance and moderation and humanity in healing the divisions which had been the cause of the rising.

The same want of judgement which makes weak princes submit to the dominion of favourites usually prevents them also from choosing those favourites well. And Henry was no exception to the general rule. His principal counsellor was the Duke of Suffolk, a man of mean extraction and of odious character, sordid, tyrannical and intriguing; having apparently no aim but to perpetuate and increase his own influence. And while he directed the government, the Court became the scene of treacheries almost as foul as had disgraced that of France at the beginning of the century. A princess was convicted of employing magic arts to shorten the life of the king; the Duke of Gloucester, an uncle of the king, was assassinated in his bed; discontent was universal.

At last Suffolk himself was murdered by his enemies; but the evils of the kingdom were too deep-seated to be removed by the death of one minister, who was succeeded by another equally undeserving. Insurrections broke out in England itself. One band of insurgents even made itself

master of London, and defeated a royal army which was sent against it. And, while uneasiness and alarm reigned in every part of the kingdom, Henry was seized with an illness which for a time deranged his faculties, and rendered him incapable of paying even a nominal attention to the affairs of the realm.

It became necessary to appoint a regent, or protector of the kingdom, and York was at once named to the office by the Parliament, with the general approval of all parties. He at once put an end to the misgovernment which had created the former discontents; threw the minister, the Duke of Somerset, into prison, and had made great progress in restoring tranquillity, when Henry recovered and replaced Somerset in office. It was generally believed that Somerset was resolved to revenge himself by the destruction of York. And York saw no prospect of safety but in arms. He at once levied a small force and marched towards London.

In a battle at St. Alban's he defeated an army which was brought against him by Somerset, who had persuaded or compelled the king, unwarlike as he was, to accompany him. Somerset himself was slain, and Henry was taken prisoner. The

agitation presently brought back a return of his malady : he became a second time deranged, and York was a second time appointed protector, with all the authority of the sovereign.

But the attack of the king's army by a subject, if not supported by similar deeds, was an act of rebellion ; if followed up by other operations, was the commencement of civil war ; and whichever name might be given to it, it manifestly threatened Henry's throne. Had he been alone he would perhaps have preferred resigning it to fighting for it ; but his consort, Margaret, was of a different temper, eminently endowed with the resolution and ambition in which he was deficient, and with abilities also to render her courage formidable to any antagonist.

She was the younger daughter of René, who for a short time had been King of Naples, till he was defeated and forced to surrender his crown to Alphonso the Magnanimous, King of Aragon ; and who also bore the French title of Duke of Anjou and Lorraine ; from which circumstance his daughter is spoken of by English historians as Margaret of Anjou. Her marriage with Henry had been one of the diplomatic achievements of

the Duke of Suffolk, but had not been generally acceptable to her new subjects, who regarded her as a French princess, and who, while their armies were still striving to maintain their ground in Normandy, naturally regarded everything belonging to France with a hostile eye. She was not of a disposition to endure any revolt against her husband's authority. Though but a child when her father was driven from Naples, she had felt deep indignation at the pusillanimity with which he had acquiesced in the extinction of his royal power and his degradation to an inferior rank, and she was resolved that the family should not supply a second example of such a fall, if she could avert it by any exertion or any sacrifice.

After a short time, the second illness of Henry passed away, as the first had done. He resumed his authority; and she, exercising it for him, prepared to hesitate at no measure which might seem necessary to prevent any one from wresting it from her in future, even if her husband should become permanently incapable of governing. For, as she rightly conceived, the rights of her infant son were concerned in the maintenance of those of his father; and if the civil war,—or treason,

and rebellion, as she termed it,—should be renewed, there could be little prospect that a party whose chiefs were an unwarlike king and a child would be able long to maintain a contest with the most distinguished soldier in the land.

Margaret was undoubtedly justified in her estimate of the state of affairs. Beyond all question her husband was the rightful king of the land. Even if his grandfather had violated the laws of kindred and honour by his intrigues against Richard II., yet it could not be disputed that he had been placed on the throne by the deliberate act of the two Houses of Parliament; and half a century of undisputed possession had ratified the right of his son and of his grandson. The Duke of York himself had repeatedly sworn allegiance to Henry VI. There was equally little doubt that his appearing in arms at St. Alban's against his sovereign was an act of treason, of which, if it were not chastised, circumstances were sure to bring about a repetition.

Nor, though naturally inclined to rate his right to the crown more highly, is it likely that York himself took a different view of the state of the case, so far as his future relations to Henry were

concerned. He was too sagacious not to be aware that rebellion is rarely pardoned in sincerity, and that the king, or rather the queen (for no one on either side regarded Henry himself), could never forget what he had once done, or cease to regard him as an enemy. But, while his and her feeling towards each other was therefore one of mutual suspicion, each sought for a while to disarm the other by a pretence of reconciliation and mutual confidence. Margaret even invited York and his principal friends, of whom the Earls of Warwick and Salisbury were the most powerful and important, to visit the Court at Coventry. And they, on their part, though they feared to put themselves so completely in her power, consented to meet her in London, and to attend the king in a procession to the great cathedral of St. Paul's, to proclaim an entire reconciliation and union for the future with all the sanction of religion.

As Henry marched alone up the noble nave, as undisputed king, Margaret followed hand in hand with the Duke of York, and, while each influential noble of the one party gave in like manner his hand to a noble of the other, it might have seemed that

the tranquillity of the kingdom was now restored and secured. But this friendship and unity was but an outward show, where all was hollow underneath, and where even those who most warmly professed union knew that it was so. Their dependents, however, were less patient dissemblers than their masters, and the intercourse between them, while both remained in the capital, was fatal to the continuance of peace. Brawls arose between some of the king's servants and those of the Earl of Warwick. The earl, professing to think his own life in danger, fled to Calais, the only stronghold in France now remaining to England, and of which he was governor, and had little difficulty in persuading York that the whole party was equally aimed at, and that its only safety was in open war.

More than three hundred years had passed away since the crown of England had been the subject of a contest in the field; and there were many points of resemblance in the struggle between Stephen and Matilda to that which was now about to commence which might well encourage Margaret to hope for a favourable result. Then, also, a woman and a boy had had their unquestion-

able rights assailed by their nearest kinsman, who also united to proved skill as a warrior the qualities of courtesy and liberality which gain adherents; and that contest had ended in the establishment of Henry on the throne of his ancestors. Duke Richard could hardly be more formidable now than Stephen was then, and therefore it was with sanguine hope that Margaret now called her husband's adherents to arms.

It might have been thought an emblem of the near relationship of the contending leaders that each chose the same flower as the badge of his party; the colour alone was different. That of Henry, the Lancastrian party as it was usually called, because his grandfather had been Duke of Lancaster before he became king, assumed a red rose as their ensign; the Yorkists, making the greater show of innocence the less they had of it, wore a white rose; from which the war that now broke out has always been known as the War of the Roses.

It broke out in 1459, four years after the battle of St. Albans, and it was marked by strange vicissitudes of fortune. For some time neither side gained any advantage which was not quickly

ccounterbalanced by some corresponding disaster. The conqueror to-day became a prisoner or a fugitive to-morrow, and the events which seemed in turn the most fatal to the hopes of either proved the forerunners of brilliant successes. The result of the earliest conflicts was such as might have made a less resolute spirit than Margaret's renounce all hope. At Bloreheath, in Staffordshire, one of the boldest of the royalist commanders, Lord Audley, was routed and slain; at Northampton Henry himself became the captive of his rebellious subject; and the duke openly required the Houses of Parliament to imitate the conduct of that of Richard II., deposing Henry, and declaring him himself the rightful sovereign. It may have been that the Houses recollected the compromise which had terminated the quarrel between Stephen and the former Henry, since the decision to which they came was that Henry should retain the throne for his life, but that Richard should be accepted as his heir and successor.

Henry himself could not refuse his consent to this arrangement, since he was a prisoner in the hands of his enemies, and, even had he been free,

he probably cared but little for the kingly dignity. But Margaret was of a very different temper. It was in vain that York endeavoured to get her likewise, and her child, into his power. From the day of the defeat at Northampton she had devoted all her energies to retrieve it. And she was so far from being disheartened by the recent sentence of the Houses of Parliament, that she regarded it as an act which had strengthened the royal cause.

Nearly all the great barons of the northern counties were wearers of the red rose. The late Parliament had been summoned in too great haste for them to have time to reach London to assist in its deliberations, and to them therefore the Queen now turned herself, to rouse them to overturn a treaty to which they had not agreed.

Her sex and position pleaded powerfully in her favour. She was a wife toiling for her husband's freedom, a mother struggling for her child's inheritance. Every feeling of chivalry predisposed her hearers to listen to her with favour, and she was richly endowed with all the qualities calculated to enable her to take advantage of such a disposition. Proud though she was of her rank, she was affable and courteous to all; fearless as

she was to dare the boldest appeal to arms, she was deficient in none of the arts of insinuation and address. Wherever she went she was received with enthusiasm. Some admired her courageous spirit, others pitied her apparently helpless condition. From one motive or the other men of all ranks flocked eagerly to her standard; in a few weeks she collected an army of twenty thousand men, and without delay marched southward at their head, reckoning on being able to crush the Duke before he should have collected any force sufficient to resist her.

Though Lord Clifford, Lord Pembroke, and other barons experienced in war accompanied her, she herself assumed the chief command, and her manœuvres would have done credit to the most practised general. York met her at Wakefield, but his force was very inferior to hers in number; and while she attacked him in front with the main body, she detached a strong division to march round and fall upon his rear (the chroniclers of the day unanimously give her the credit of the manœuvre), and in less than half an hour her victory was complete. The Duke himself fell in the battle; but his son, the Earl of Rutland, with

the Earl of Salisbury and many of his most powerful partisans, were taken prisoners. They were executed as traitors, and Margaret ordered the duke's head to be placed on the gates of York and adorned with a paper crown in derision of his pretensions.

We must not approve the act of thus insulting a fallen enemy, and the execution of the prisoners has found no defenders. But what cannot be excused may yet be in some degree palliated. It was a fierce age, in which human life was but little valued, and she might fairly look on those who were put to death as having justly forfeited their lives. The same Act of Parliament which secured the succession of the Duke of York recognised Henry as the present sovereign, and to bear arms against the sovereign is treason by the law of every country.

She lost no time in improving her victory, but pressed rapidly on towards the metropolis, disregarding a disaster which befell a large body of her supporters in Herefordshire, who were cut to pieces by the new Duke of York, Edward, eldest son and successor of Duke Richard. She herself was, as before, irresistible. It was in vain that,

the Earl of Warwick encountered her at St. Alban's with an army at least as numerous as her own. He was utterly routed; and the victorious Queen had the happiness of finding that by her victory she had restored liberty to her husband, whom Warwick had compelled to accompany him to the field.

For a moment she seemed triumphant; but fortune, never more fickle than in this war, again changed sides. Edward, the new Duke of York was a far worse man than his father: he was licentious, faithless, tyrannical, and bloodthirsty, but he was far his superior in military skill; and now, seeing the necessity of at once retrieving the disaster of St. Alban's, he followed the Queen to the south with a force too strong for her to resist. She was compelled to relinquish the hope of recovering London and to retrace her steps to Yorkshire. And thither he, having first made a tumultuous meeting of the citizens pass a vote deposing Henry, and conferring the kingdom on himself, without loss of time pursued her, hoping to end the contest by one decisive victory.

He was not disappointed. The necessity of watching over her husband's health prevented

Margaret from taking her old place at the head of her troops; but the royal army, under the command of the Earl of Westmoreland, and other nobles who still adhered to Henry, met Edward at Towton, near York; and in the battle which ensued it seemed as if the skies themselves were on the side of the Yorkists. A heavy snow-storm, driving in the faces of the Lancastrians, prevented them from seeing the advance of the enemy. They were utterly defeated. Edward issued the ferocious order to give no quarter: and so faithfully was it obeyed, that thirty-six thousand of the royal army fell in the battle and the subsequent pursuit. The prisoners, though among them were numbered some of the greatest of the nobles, were slaughtered in cold blood: a violation of the ordinary laws of civilised warfare which Edward's partisans justified by the rigour which Margaret had shown to the prisoners of Wakefield. And for a while the cause of Henry appeared wholly desperate.

It would have been so, if the courage of the Queen had been of that kind to which it is generally confined even in the most resolute of her sex: courage to submit and to endure.

perhaps also to comfort and support those exposed to the same suffering. But Margaret's bravery was of a more active and daring kind. Adversity is in many ways a touchstone of character, and the apparent ruin of the prospects of those dearest to her stimulated her to exertions which would have been thought admirable even in the stoutest men. During the next ten years she was exposed to all those trials which are proverbially the hardest to endure: hopes deferred, reliance disappointed, the ruin and death of friends whose sole offence was loyalty to her husband and their king. Even the lives of herself, her husband, and her child were threatened when the triumphant and relentless Edward compelled the Houses of Parliament to pass an act of attainder against them. Yet these accumulated and continued griefs did not for one moment break her spirit or weaken the energy with which she toiled to retrieve the fallen fortunes of her family. Henry was incapable of acting or even thinking for himself; but after the fatal day of Towton she bore him to Scotland, hoping to secure the alliance of the Scotch monarch by negotiating a marriage between his daughter and

her boy. But the force which Scotland could put in motion in her cause was no match for the English army in Cumberland. She crossed over to France to implore the aid of King Louis XI., her cousin. By the promise of the restoration of Calais she won him over also to send a body of troops to Northumberland; but this aid only seemed to set the seal to her misfortunes.

Her adherents in England gladly answered her summons, and collected in arms, but their united force was far too small to encounter the Yorkist generals with the slightest chance of success. She was decisively routed at Hexham, and again Edward put to death all who fell into his hands as prisoners, high rank and noble blood only making their condemnation more certain, their pardon more hopeless. It was plain that the merciless conqueror placed his hopes of peace on exterminating all that preserved their loyalty to his predecessor. The only captive who was spared was Henry himself, and he was sent to London and consigned to an imprisonment in the Tower which was evidently designed only to end with his life.

It was not, without difficulty that Margaret

herself and her boy escaped, nor without encountering danger scarcely less formidable than that of falling into the power of Edward. When she saw that the day was irretrievably lost, she took her son by the hand and fled on foot into the neighbouring forest, hoping thus to escape notice and the consequent pursuit, which her ordinary retinue might have attracted. The Yorkist troopers she did escape, but only to fall in with a band of robbers, who, having no suspicion of her rank, but being tempted by the richness of her apparel, seized her, stripped her of her money and jewels, and might perhaps in the end have sought to remove all trace of their crime by the murder of herself and the youthful prince. From such a fate their very lawlessness saved her for a moment, though so hard was her fortune that it seemed as if she could never escape danger, but could only exchange one peril for another. The robbers began to quarrel among themselves over the division of her spoils, and while their attention was thus diverted from her, she slipped away unheeded into the thickest of the wood.

She was almost worn-out with fatigue and hunger. Her child, weaker than she, was unable

to flee further. Both had sunk on the ground in helpless exhaustion; the shades of night were falling, the cold was intense; they had no shelter, no food. It seemed as if no addition could be made to their misery, when suddenly a robber belonging to another gang came upon them, whose sword, which he held drawn in his hand, seemed to show him to be one to whom the worst deeds of blood were familiar. Though Margaret's strength was gone, her spirit was as high and firm as ever; it may even be thought that the greatness of her child's danger increased her courage. Others would have fled from the robber; she advanced towards him, as if it were still in her power to confer honour on him by placing trust in his generosity. She accosted him fearlessly: "I am your Queen; I commit to your care the safety of your King's son."¹ Robber though he was, the man was not wholly lost to virtuous impulses: courage he naturally esteemed as the first of royal virtues, and the lower he was fallen the more highly did he esteem the honour of serving.

¹ Monstrelet places this incident on the Continent, in the forest of Hainault, as she was travelling from France to Burgundy.

a queen. He gladly accepted the trust reposed in him; he sheltered the noble fugitives in his cave, provided them with food, devoted himself to their protection, and having concealed them till the search for them had abated, guided them at last to the coast, where a ship was found to convey them once more to France.

If she was now safe, it might at least have seemed that she could no longer hope. Her noblest friends had perished on the field or on the scaffold, she and her child were exiles, her husband was a prisoner. But amid the worst misfortunes the truly brave never despair, and she continued diligent in her efforts to make new friends for her husband, or to raise up new enmities against Edward to shake him on his throne. At one time she persuaded Louis to plan a fresh invasion of England. At another she nearly won over the Duke of Burgundy, though his wife was Edward's sister, to promise to procure the release of Henry from the Tower, when, if he were once more free, she trusted yet to find champions to arm again in his cause.

These hopes of foreign aid deceived her. Edward on his throne, however unjustly it was won, was



THE ROBBERY OF ANJOU AND THE ROBBER.

more powerful with foreign princes than her husband could be in his prison, or she in her exile. But what she could not do for herself, Edward at last did for her. By his licentiousness and tyranny he alienated many of those who had been his most zealous supporters. Rebellions broke out in several counties, in more than one of which his forces suffered mortifying defeats; and though they were eventually quelled, yet Edward's success was hardly beneficial to him, so great was the disgust which he excited by his indiscriminate execution, not only of all who had been in any degree concerned in them, but even of some great nobles whose offence was only that of having failed to crush them with the completeness for which he had looked. At last he even quarrelled with the Earl of Warwick, the most powerful of all the nobles of the kingdom, and, when the earl fled to his government of Calais, offered a reward for his apprehension.

Such an insult Warwick was little inclined to brook. His idea of his own importance was such that he had been heard to declare that it was he who had made Edward king, and he now boasted that what he had made he could unmake.

Margaret had been too long on the watch for such an opportunity to delay to profit by it now. Thirsting for revenge, the earl entreated King Louis to mediate between the Queen and him, and Margaret received his advances with magnanimous cordiality, forgetting and forgiving all the evil which he had done to her and her house, and concluded a treaty with him in which she promised him the hand of her son, now rapidly growing up to manhood, for one of his daughters, while he undertook to restore Henry to liberty and to his throne. Neither Queen nor Earl were inclined to loiter in the fulfilment of an agreement so calculated to gratify the ambition and desire of revenge which animated both. Warwick at once returned to England and began to levy an army, Margaret being prepared to follow as soon as she should hear of his having established his footing in the island. Edward, on his part, was no less active: at the approach of danger he shook off his luxurious indolence, collected his forces, and marched to attack Warwick, hoping to meet him before he had time to become formidable, and before Margaret could arrive, since it was certain that her presence would rouse many of the old

Lancastrian party to take arms who would hardly be brought to join the standard of the earl from whom they had suffered so much in the former years of the war.

The history of no age or country furnishes stranger or more rapid changes of fortune than now alternately raised and depressed the hopes of each side. Here apparent ruin is followed by decisive triumph; there the seeming accomplishment of the most sanguine hopes is granted for a moment, as if only to make disaster more bitter by the contrast. Neither Edward nor Warwick trusted wholly to military strength and skill. Each placed a part of his reliance on the treacherous aid which he believed himself to have secured from leaders in the ranks of his enemy. But Warwick's confidence was the better founded. The armies had approached from different quarters till their camps were within sight of each other, when, in the dead of the night, the Marquis of Montague, with all his followers, left the Yorkist camp and joined Warwick. And Edward would have been surprised in his bed, had he not received warning of his danger just in time to mount a horse and flee to the coast.

Only eleven days had elapsed since Warwick had landed in Devonshire, and in that brief space of time he had traversed half the kingdom, and become master of the whole. He lost no time in fulfilling part of his agreement with Margaret, but instantly returned to London, set Henry at liberty, and summoned a Parliament, which reinstated the old king on the throne and attainted Edward, just as, nine years before, at his bidding, it had attainted Henry. At last Margaret might think herself rewarded for all her exertions and all her sufferings. King Louis invited her to Paris, as a pledge of his resolution to give her all the aid in his power, and, as she approached the city, despatched a splendid retinue of nobles, warriors, prelates, and councillors to meet her and escort her with all honour to the royal palace.

But no gleam of prosperity which she had ever enjoyed had been as delusive as this. From Paris she repaired to Flanders, and was rapidly making preparation for joining her liberated husband, from whom she had so long been separated, when Edward, in whom misfortune had revived all the energy which the undisturbed enjoyment of power had lulled to sleep, suddenly

returned to England and landed in Yorkshire. He had brought but a small body of troops with him, but his old adherents flocked to his standard. In London he had always been popular, and that great city gladly opened its gates to him. Henry himself again fell into his power, while some of Warwick's nearest kinsmen betrayed him.

The 14th of April, 1471, put a final termination to the contest, and decided the fate of both parties. On that day Margaret, with her son, now a spirited youth of eighteen, landed at Weymouth with a small French force, and prepared to join the great earl. But treachery similar to that which had compelled Edward to flee from Nottingham was now at work in the Lancastrian army. On the very eve of battle, Warwick found himself deserted by half his force; and the same afternoon that saw Margaret with exulting confidence offer her thanks to the Almighty for having restored her to her husband and her kingdom, the great earl on whom all her hope rested was defeated and slain on the field of Barnet.

Yet even now she could not wholly despair. While it was possible that any effort might succeed, it was her duty to make that effort. If her

husband was again captive, her son at least was free, and of an age and of a promise to justify the hopes and confidence of the adherents of his house. And for that noble young son it might still be possible to strike a blow. The fatal news which had reached her forbade her indeed to advance to London; but in Wales and the districts bordering on the Principality the House of Lancaster had still a faithful band of adherents in whom it could trust. Towards Wales, therefore, she determined to make her way; and, for a few days, her heart was cheered by the sight of troops of still faithful Lancastrians, daily hastening to swell her numbers as she advanced.

But Edward had been too severely taught by recent experience how precarious was his seat on the throne to be blind to the danger of giving her time to reach a district so unfavourable to military operations as Wales. The moment that he learnt the direction of her march, he set forth at the head of his victorious army in pursuit of her, and moving with great rapidity, overtook her at Tewkesbury, on the Severn, only three weeks after he had crushed Warwick at Barnet. The contest was too unequal to last long. His force doubled her num-

bers, and the inequality of skill was still greater. Her long train of disasters had indeed swept away from the Lancastrian ranks every noble of renown or prowess in war, and those who were now Margaret's chief supporters could not for a single hour resist the impetuous and well-directed charge of the Yorkist army. Margaret herself, with her son, were among the prisoners, and Edward's previous cruelties left little doubt as to the fate which was in store for them. The young prince was instantly slaughtered in his presence, he himself, with unkingly and unknightly insolence, dealing him the first blow; and, little as Henry himself was to be feared, orders were sent to put him also to death.

The only one of his enemies whom the conqueror spared was Margaret herself. She was so nearly related to more than one sovereign upon the Continent, and especially to Louis of France and the Duke of Burgundy, that Edward would not venture to shed her blood. His utmost jealousy could no longer look upon her as formidable when her husband and son were lost to her, and

"The aspiring blood of Lancaster
Had sunk into the ground,"

without leaving one representative whose rights she could now desire to maintain; and after a time he allowed Louis to ransom her, and to give her an asylum in France, where, ten years afterwards, she died, the only comfort of her declining years being the memory of the fidelity and constancy with which to the last she had struggled against the cruelty and injustice of fortune.

Hume has summed up her character in a few words, as an admirable princess, but more illustrious for her undaunted "spirit in adversity than for her moderation in prosperity," adding, that "she seems neither to have enjoyed the virtues nor to have been subject to the weaknesses of her sex;" and that she was "as much tainted with the ferocity as endowed with the courage of the barbarous age in which she lived."

We may probably think the censure of the great historian somewhat too general and indiscriminating. We must indeed agree with him in lamenting the fierce rigour with which she put to death her prisoners at Wakefield; but we must at the same time remember that she had some right to look on their lives as lawfully forfeited, and their act of waging war against their sovereign

as one of treason, which in all ages has been punished with death. With the softer virtues of conjugal and maternal affection her whole history proves her to have been abundantly endowed. And if the courage with which she upheld her husband's cause is not to be reckoned among the virtues of her sex, it is only because women are, happily, not often placed in situations in which the exercise of such a quality in such a manner is required of them. But it can hardly be denied that fidelity, energy, patience, and fortitude are virtues which shed a lustre alike on the female as on the manly character; and these she displayed in a most conspicuous degree and in the holiest of causes, the defence of the rights of her husband and of her son. And unless success or failure are to be the standard by which we are to measure our praise and our blame, they fairly vindicate her claim to rank among the heroines of her sex and of her adopted country.

ISABELLA OF CASTILE.

FOR some centuries the Spaniards have been accustomed to arrogate to themselves a peculiar sanctity as the most orthodox and zealous supporters of Christianity. But in an earlier age their country was that in which the worship of the Saviour was most nearly extinguished, the only land in Western Europe in which the Christian sovereign was dethroned by the Infidel. The religion founded by Mahomet had been one which sought for proselytes by the sword. Eastward and westward invasion and conquest had subdued the nations on either side of Arabia. Each fresh extension of power made further acquisitions easier, and by the end of the century in which the Prophet had set up his standard at Mecca, his victorious troops had overrun the whole sea coast of Africa, and from the heights of Morocco looked across

the narrow strait on the fertile plains of Andalusia. To behold was to covet ; to covet was to attack. The Christians were divided among themselves, and some of them, though of noble blood, were not ashamed to betray their fellow-Christians and their native land, and to guide the Moslem soldiers of Tarik to battle against their own sovereign.

A single battle decided the fate of Spain: King Roderic perished on the field. The conqueror was not one who halted on the path of victory. Midsummer had passed before he shouted his war cry on the plains of Xeres ; autumn had hardly given place to winter before he had reached the shores of the Bay of Biscay, and had established the supremacy of the Crescent in every part of the Peninsula.

But the Mahometans were neither exterminating nor intolerant. The natives were still permitted to cultivate the land under their Moorish caliphs, and even to profess their ancient religion, on condition of the payment of a moderate tribute. After a time the conquerors even ceased to retain more than a nominal dominion over a great part of the country. They were a luxurious .

race, for whom the sunny slopes and flowery plains of Andalusia and Granada had an irresistible fascination, but to whom the rugged snow-clad mountains and barren table-lands of Leon and Castile were in an equal degree distasteful. And, profiting by their indifference, the Christians gradually recovered the northern provinces, and established kingdoms in Castile and Aragon, which, shortly after the middle of the fifteenth century, became united by the marriage of their sovereigns, Isabella and Ferdinand.

The husband and wife differed widely in character. Ferdinand was crafty, unscrupulous, unenterprising, and parsimonious, eager indeed to extend his power and influence, but for that object preferring to trust to diplomatic subtlety rather than to warlike aggression. Isabella, on the other hand, was frank, conscientious, liberal, and enthusiastic, her predominating idea and ruling principle being that, if the first duty of a ruler were to watch over the prosperity of the kingdoms committed to his care, the surest way to promote that prosperity was to foster piety, and, when necessary, to propagate the knowledge of the true religion. It was a feeling which was naturally

engendered with more than usual fervour in the Spanish Christians by the continual conflict which for generations they had been forced to wage with their Mahometan neighbours! in the south; by which indeed they had gradually won the independence of the northern kingdoms of the Peninsula; and which in herself was further stimulated by the sight of the fairest provinces of the Peninsula being still in the hands of those whose infidelity she regarded as an insult to the Almighty, and whose overthrow and expulsion from the land she therefore regarded as a religious duty.

It was one which from the first moment of her accession to the throne of Castile she had resolved to undertake; and, among the different causes for the exultation with which she regarded the union of her kingdom with that of Aragon, not the weakest was the conviction that she had thus acquired a degree of power which all the resources of the Saracens would be unable to resist. She was not ignorant of the extent of those resources. For nearly two hundred years, indeed, the dominion of the Moors had been confined to Granada; but, though the narrow extent of that

province scarcely entitled it to the name of kingdom, it was so prodigally enriched by nature, and the wisdom and enterprise of man had so skillfully availed itself of its natural advantages, that in substantial power it could vie with far larger and more imposing territories. Its mountainous frontier, which served as a rampart to keep out foreign enemies, was rich in mineral wealth, and in the still more invaluable treasures of a hardy and bold population. Its well-watered valleys were suited for every kind of agricultural produce; verdant pastures and slopes heavy with yellow corn being varied by orchards in which all the most delicious fruits ripened with an abundance which seemed to stand in need of no cultivation. Its coasts were indented with deep and well-sheltered harbours, which invited merchants from all quarters; and commercial treaties with almost every nation in Europe enriched sovereign and people by the mutual interchange of commodities of necessity or luxury.

The inhabitants were not unworthy of such a country. The judicious liberality of a succession of sovereigns had encouraged the cultivation of

literature, science, and art. The astronomers and architects of Granada were second to none of their brethren in Europe. And, widely different as was the feeling with which the Moorish cavalier regarded the inmates of his harem from the homage which the Christian knight paid to his lady love, yet, in the chivalrous exercises which formed the chief pastime of the Middle Ages, the warriors of Granada adopted the fashions of the chivalry of Castile, and in horsemanship and the use of arms could vie with the most accomplished champions of Christendom. The army too, which, whenever occasion for its services arose, followed these leaders to the field, though not numerous, was formidable for its discipline and valour; while every city had been carefully fortified by engineering skill, in which, in those days, the Saracens had no superiors. Altogether the nation was one whose capacity for war, whether defensive or offensive, could not be lightly regarded by the most adventurous or the most presumptuous enemy.

• Isabella, however, though fully alive to such considerations, and fully aware of the resources at the command of the Moors, was not daunted

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by them. And it coincided in a singular degree with the resolve which she had formed that the King of Granada, Abul Hacen, had views of religious obligation closely akin to her own.

Many years before, the fortune of war had proved so unfavourable to his predecessors that they had been reduced to confess the superiority of the sovereigns of Castile by an annual tribute. But Abul Hacen refused to continue this payment, being moved not more by the indignity of thus owning subjection to a foreign prince, than by the consideration that it was impious for a true believer (as every Mahometan styled himself) to help to fill the treasury of a prince who despised his Prophet. He replied to the officers who were sent to receive the tribute that "the mines of Granada coined no longer gold, but steel." And, well aware that this language would be regarded as a challenge to war, he resolved to anticipate the attack which he foresaw; and in the winter of 1481 he surprised Zahara, one of the strongest fortresses on the Spanish frontier, put the garrison to the sword, and carried off the whole population, of every age and sex, into slavery.

Even had Isabella not been predetermined in war, to such a challenge there could be but one answer. The insult roused even the colder temperament of Ferdinand, and his Queen had no difficulty in persuading him to make it a plea for war, which should be waged with the entire strength of their united kingdoms. It was felt equally by every noble in the land, and before a royal army could be levied and placed on a footing worthy of the sovereign, a single noble, the Marquis of Cadiz, had revenged the capture of Zahara by the surprise and sack of the Moorish fortress of Alhama.

Alhama was a far more important place and a far richer prize than Zahara. It was celebrated for its medicinal springs, which had long rendered it one of the most favourite resorts of the sovereign. It was also the seat of some of the most valuable manufactures of the kingdom, and it was so difficult of access, being built on the crest of a steep and rugged rock, and was also so elaborately fortified, that it had been selected as the treasury of a large portion of the national revenue. Indeed, it was its strength that had been its ruin, by the false confidence with which it inspired the garrison.

And its capture was therefore a severe blow, both to the military strength and also to the financial resources of the kingdom. The intelligence spread dismay among the Moors and exultation among the Spaniards, and stimulated both to the instant exertion of their utmost power, the Moors bringing all their energies to its recovery, the Spaniards theirs to its preservation. The whole strength of both monarchies was so entirely concentrated on this one point, that it was evident that the war which was now commencing would never be terminated but by the establishment of the complete supremacy of one or other of the antagonists.

At first success and failure were not unevenly balanced. Abul Hacen was repulsed in an endeavour to expel the Spaniards from Alhama; but on the other hand, Ferdinand, who himself had taken the command of his army, sustained a severe defeat at Loja. He fell back on Cordova, and was so disheartened that he proposed to desist for a time at least from the war, and even to withdraw the garrison from Alhama and to restore it to its former masters.

That the pusillanimous idea was laid aside was due solely to his more resolute consort. Her

spirit rose with the call the late disaster had made upon it. Her language was that of a warrior and of a statesman, rather than of a delicate woman. She reminded her husband that "glory was not to be won without danger. That they both had known beforehand the difficulties and perils to be incurred in such a war. But they had counted the cost; and both honour and prudence forbade them to draw back, now that they had once put their hand to the plough." And she sent peremptory orders for reinforcements and supplies to every city in her own dominion of Castile, that no time might be lost in retrieving the late disaster, and in proving to the Moors her unabated determination to subdue them.

It boded well for the eventual triumph of the Christians that just at this time, when the presence of the enemy in the land ought to have united all hearts and hands among the Moors in the most cordial unanimity, a series of domestic intrigues in the royal harem divided the Saracen Court and its principal nobles, and were only ended by an almost total revolution in the Government. The veteran Abul Hacen was driven from Granada; was compelled to yield the greater part

of his territories, with the capital, to his heir, Abdallah, or Boabdil; and, with his younger brother Abdallah, surnamed El Zagal, or "The Valiant," to take refuge in Malaga, which, with a few cities in its immediate neighbourhood, were all that henceforth acknowledged his authority. Both factions, indeed, were equally stedfast in their resolution to defend their country against the Christians, but the Spanish sovereigns could not fail to perceive how greatly the whole nation was weakened by its insane divisions.

It was not, however, in the first campaign that the evil consequences of these divisions were seen. Malaga was as stoutly defended by El Zagal as it could have been by the power of the whole nation, and the first attempt by the Spanish warriors to profit by their enemies' intestine quarrels and make themselves master of that important city, was repulsed with the heaviest loss that had been sustained by any Spanish army during the century, and with a disgrace more intolerable to Spanish pride than the loss. Even the Marquis of Cadiz, the victor of Alhama, and the Grand Master of St. Iago, the principal order of Spanish knighthood, only purchased safety by ignominious

flight, while of their followers at least half either perished on the field or became prisoners.

But, as we have seen to happen before, this triumph of the one side was speedily counter-balanced by a triumph of the other. Within a month of the day on which El Zagal routed his assailants in the plain of Malaga, his victory was more than retaliated under the walls of Lucena. It was, indeed, the new King of Granada, and not the veteran Abul Hacen, who was the sufferer, but the army which he led in vain into the plains around Cordova was the largest that had yet been collected on either side in the war ; it comprised, indeed, the flower of the Moorish chivalry ; and the defeat which it met was so decisive that the king himself was among the prisoners. With subtle policy, Ferdinand gave him his liberty, lest his captivity should strengthen the Moors by reuniting them under one head ; but he was disappointed at finding that with his liberty the king recovered his resolution, and that every Moorish fortress still contained a garrison on whom national pride and religious enthusiasm worked as resolutely as ever to preserve its loyalty to its sovereign and its religion.

Once more Ferdinand lost heart, and proposed to lay aside the further prosecution of the war, at least for a time. Once more Isabella rejected the idea, as unworthy alike of King or Christian, and declared herself ready to continue the war with the resources of her own dominions alone. Once more her resolution and enthusiasm were contagious. "The grandees," as the contemporary chronicler relates, "were mortified and ashamed at being surpassed in their zeal for this holy war by a woman." They vied with one another in bringing recruits to her standard. And at last Ferdinand himself yielded to her remonstrances and entreaties, and consented to resume operations.

But it was a cold consent and a sluggish co-operation which he gave; and it was his heroic wife on whom fell all the care and labour of providing the means for the continuance of the campaign. She it was who invited engineers and artillerists from every country in Europe. She established foundries and manufactories of ammunition; she superintended in person the arrangements for the conveyance of the necessary supplies of all kinds; she established movable hospitals, which she furnished with an abundant supply of

all things necessary for the sick and wounded, showing in this a foresight for the welfare of her followers of which the previous military history of Europe had set no example. And while the preparations for the advance of the army were thus being made, she constantly visited the camp in person, encouraging the soldiers by her visible sympathy in all their toils and hardships, and relieving their necessities with a generosity as judicious as it was worthy of her rank and of the cause in which she had thus enlisted them.

So successful was she in inspiring all around her with her own energy, that by the summer of 1486 she had collected at Cordova nearly forty thousand men, of whom one-third were cavalry. And when all was ready for their advance, she not only took her seat with her husband at the council of war; bore a leading part in all the deliberations; and by the admission of all was the authoress of many of the suggestions which contributed most greatly to the success of the ensuing operations; but she reviewed the troops herself, and addressed to them a spirit-stirring speech, in which it was characteristic of her own singleness of purpose that what she most em-

phatically dwelt upon was the religious character of the war. The Pope, Sextus IV., had shown his adoption of her view by presenting the army with a massive silver crucifix to be kept always in the camp; and among the supplies which she was most careful to provide was a vast store of bells, missals, communion plate, and other ecclesiastical furniture, which was designed for the Mahometan mosques as soon as they should have been brought under the dominion of the Christians.

Her labours was rewarded with a success which, though slow, was steady. El Zagal, whom the recent death of Abul Hacen had raised to the throne of Malaga, did indeed on more than one occasion display his vigilance and untiring skill in the discomfiture of detached bodies of the Castilian warriors. But a few successful skirmishes could not counterbalance the loss of town after town and fortress after fortress which the Cross gradually wrested from the Crescent. The progress of the Christians was indeed slow; above a year elapsed of almost continued fighting, but steadily the Spanish host made its way, till at last it had traversed the whole province, and,

having reached the eastern coast, laid siege to Malaga itself. Malaga was the principal seaport of the Moorish kingdom, the mart for the whole commerce of the countries on the shore of the Mediterranean — of Marseilles, Venice, Genoa, and Constantinople, and of India also. By sea it was unassailable, since the Christian sovereigns had as yet no naval forces, and on the landward side it had been fortified with all the resources of engineering skill, and it was held by a numerous and intrepid garrison.

So stubborn was its resistance, and so disheartened were the main body of the besiegers by the vigour of the fire from the walls, and still more of the sallies by which, night after night, El Zagal forced his way into their camp and destroyed many of their engines of war, that Ferdinand begged the Queen herself to join him, to reanimate his men with their old courage.

She came, but her arrival had nearly brought ruin on the whole enterprise, the success of which depended on her personal safety. El Zagal himself, though an Infidel, was inspired by the chivalrous feeling of a Christian knight, and would have scorned any success which was attained by base means ;

but his followers were less scrupulous, and one fearless fanatic resolved to save his fellow-countrymen by the destruction of her whom he regarded as the one invincible enemy of his race. Feigning to be a deserter from the beleaguered city, he obtained access to the royal tents; his destined victim was in his power, and, in the belief of the contemporary historian who records the incident, nothing but the care of the Almighty for his religion preserved the Queen, who well deserved such special protection. More than one of her ladies was far more sumptuously apparelled than she, and one of them, the Marchioness of Moya, was so princely in attire and general appearance that the assassin mistook her for her royal mistress. Springing on her, dagger in hand, he aimed a deadly blow at her throat: but fortunately the fashion of the day prescribed such a thickness of quilting and embroidery for the ladies' robes that the weapon failed to pierce it, and the marchioness escaped unhurt.

Nor did the danger to which she had thus been exposed in the least shake the Queen's purpose of persevering in the contest, while it served as a powerful incentive to her subjects of

every class to bring the war against an enemy capable of such treachery to a successful and early termination. The great nobles brought up their retainers in such abundance that the royal army was soon almost doubled; and, while in numbers it exceeded any host that had been seen in Spain since first the Moslem established himself in the Peninsula, in its discipline and good conduct it presented an appearance such as certainly no army in the world had previously furnished. For in the view of Isabella it was the army of heaven, and she could not endure that a force devoted to a religious object should show itself in any respect unworthy of its sacred calling. Gambling, therefore, drunkenness and every kind of licentiousness and riot, were rigorously repressed. And every morning was ushered in with the services of the Church, large companies of priests and friars traversing every part of the camp with all the pomp and splendour of the Roman Catholic ceremonial; and as nobles, captains, and troopers bent before them, each felt himself exalted with the high devotional feeling which should ever animate the champions of the Cross.

After a siege of three months Malaga fell. With unspeakable joy the Queen saw the Spanish ensign re-established on the walls, and the Infidel mosques purified and converted into Christian temples. But there were other rich and powerful cities to be conquered, also, before the conquest could be considered complete. The most important was Baza, the attack on which was likely to be in one respect easier, inasmuch as it lay on the northern side of the great Sierra Nevada, so that no mountain passes or rugged defiles were interposed to impede the advance of a besieging army; but which in another point of view might be expected to be a more arduous enterprise than the reduction of Malaga, since El Zagal had made it his capital and his own abode, and from a garrison directed by the skill of so warlike a sovereign, and fighting under his eye, a pertinacity of resistance might be looked for which no weaker motive would be able equally to stimulate.

And for some time it seemed as if the forebodings of difficulty were more likely to be verified than the promises of victory. Elated at the conquest of Malaga, the Spaniards had flocked to their king's standard till the host now collected under

his command exceeded even that which achieved that triumph. But El Zagal's garrison numbered twenty thousand men, full of confidence in their leader, and who added to a zeal for their religion, as fervent as that of Isabella herself for hers, a conviction that on their prowess were staked the last hope for the royal authority of their king and their own independence as a people. The situation of their city gave them many advantages: the ground around was rugged and broken; thick plantations and orchards impeded the manœuvres of the besiegers' cavalry and the approach of artillery; and El Zagal took skilful advantage of every favourable circumstance, and in repeated sallies inflicted such loss on Ferdinand's force, that once more his resolution wavered, and in a council of war he formally proposed to raise the siege.

Once more, therefore, Isabella had to animate the faltering spirit of her husband. She had remained at Jaen, superintending the collection and transmission of the necessary supplies, and after a time the task became one of unusual difficulty. The siege had lasted five months when a storm, such as is rarely seen even in that mountainous region, burst over the whole district occupied by

the besieging army, not only inundating the camp, but destroying the roads, and for some days cutting off all communication with the Queen's dominions. But even to this calamity the Queen's indefatigable resolution proved equal. Without a day's delay she set about the work of repairing the damage. In little more than a week six thousand workmen were collected and employed in clearing away the ruin which the floods had left, and reconstructing the roads and bridges. She herself paid daily visits to the working parties, and provided funds for this unlooked-for expenditure by the sacrifice of her own jewels.

But the garrison of Baza, greatly encouraged by the disaster which had befallen its assailants, maintained its gallant defence with unabated resolution; in many a successful sally they broke through the lines of the besiegers; sickness began to thin the Spanish ranks; despondency began to infect even the boldest of the Spanish captains; and the few whose courage was still unbroken sent messengers to Jaen to implore the Queen to join them herself, if she would not see all the exertions that had been made thrown away by an ignominious retreat.

Such a call was, to her feelings, a call of the most imperative duty, which she did not hesitate to obey; but the moment that the roads were reopened she quitted Jaen, and after a rapid march, on the 7th of November, 1489, rode into her husband's camp. Her arrival at once changed the aspect of affairs and the feelings of both armies, the besieged as well as the besieging. Among the Spaniards the most timid or the least hopeful could no longer shrink from the endurance of toils and hardships which his Queen had come to share. And there were few who did not feel, as it were, a personal attachment to herself, and personal gratitude for the exertions which they knew her to have made for their welfare and comfort; while of the common soldiers, in whom ignorance naturally bred more superstition than among the nobles, many believed that she was in truth no mortal woman, but a saint sent down from heaven to secure the triumph of the Cross, and by many her name was invoked in their prayers as that of the patroness and tutelar angel of the army and kingdom.

Among the Moors, on the other hand, her arrival caused a dismay as deep and general as the confi-

dence which it diffused among the Spaniards. They saw in it a proof of a determination that the siege should never be raised, and even the stout heart of El Zagal himself confessed the hopelessness of resisting an enemy whom each disaster seemed only to render more energetic and more fertile in resources. He saw, too, that as he still had the means of holding out for a time, he was in a position to make terms which might hereafter become unattainable. Submission to the decrees of fate is a chief doctrine of Islamism ; and comforting himself with the belief that "what Allah wills he accomplishes in his own way," and that submission to the Spanish sovereign was, in fact, but another name for submission to the laws of his Prophet and his God, he sent an embassy to the Spanish camp, surrendering not only Baza, but Almeria, a harbour and commercial mart, inferior only to Malaga ; and retaining a royal authority only over the small district of Andaraz ; while he consented to hold even that as a vassal of the Castilian crown, and to perform homage and pay tribute for it to Isabella as his sovereign lady.

The more important half of Granada was now subdued ; nothing now remained to the Moors but the

city of Granada itself, and the small surrounding district, which still adhered to Boabdil. On his accession he had received the surname of El Zogoybi, or "The Unfortunate," from those who saw in the divisions of the nation and the triumph of the faction to which he owed his throne the crowning misfortune of the Moslem dynasty in the Peninsula. The time was at hand when the surname was to be painfully justified.

Boabdil was a brave prince, and each successive overthrow of the Moors in other quarters had strengthened his city by driving to it all who did not even yet despair of their country. He sternly rejected Ferdinand's summons to follow the example of El Zagal; and, not contented with repelling the assaults of the Christians, more than once carried the war into their territories, captured more than one Christian stronghold, and roused to revolt towns which El Zagal had surrendered, and which, since the fatal division of the kingdom, had never before recognised his authority.

- Ferdinand, too, had been stimulated to unusual energy by the knowledge that Granada was the Moslem's last hope, and that its reduc-

tion was all that was needed to bring the war, which had now lasted ten years, to a glorious termination. But month after month passed by and found the brave city still unsubdued, till again the Spanish captains sent a petition for the presence of their Queen, as the one talisman of victory of which both Spaniards and Moors acknowledged the efficacy. She never refused such an invitation. She hastened to the camp to make the triumph of her soldiers more certain and speedy by a more visible participation than before in their labours and dangers. For she came now like a male warrior, clad in complete armour and mounted on a trained war horse; and, while she relaxed none of the gentler cares with which she had provided for her soldiers' wants or alleviated their sufferings; while she visited the hospitals with all her former tenderness, and solaced the wounded with her personal sympathy, she more than once advanced at the head of a battalion to the very walls of the city, and one of the fiercest actions of the whole siege was fought in her presence.

And still the faithful garrison continued unsubdued. Month after month passed by, and

still the Spanish cavaliers wasted their strength in seeking to force their way into the city, and still the Moorish horsemen would sally forth from the gates, provoke their foes to personal combat, and part again with equal prowess and equal glory.

A second year was passing away, and Isabella resolved to give Boabdil a proof of her resolution that winter itself should procure him no respite. The name of the mountain range, "The Snowy Ridge," is of itself a token of the fearful hardships which befall an army which has no shelter but its tents from that inclement season. She determined that her army should be saved such a trial, and at the beginning of autumn she laid the foundations of a city on the very spot where the camp stood. Its form was to be that of a cross; its name was to be Santa Fé, "The Holy Faith;" its completion was to be a pledge, both to Christian and Infidel, that the war which had brought it into existence should never cease till the triumph of the Christian should also be completed.

As such Boabdil accepted it; and at Christmas, 1491, he too confessed himself conquered. He had

done all that the bravest warrior could effect ; but the dominions which remained to him were but a small fragment of the former Moorish kingdom. He yielded to superior numbers and superior riches, rather than to superior valour or superior skill, and he did his best for his subjects when he procured for them from the humanity of his conquerors such indulgences as Isabella's duty to her own religion permitted her to grant.

It was a truly proud moment, and one that recompensed her for all her toils and anxieties, when, on the 22nd of January, 1492, a picked band of horsemen, characteristically led by a cardinal of the Church bearing a gigantic crucifix, rode forth from the camp to take possession of the beautiful city, which for upwards of seven hundred years the Moorish sovereigns had been constantly embellishing and enriching, till it shone with a magnificence of which, to this very day, the memory has not died away. As Isabella entered the city gate a vast body of Christian clergy raised a triumphant hymn, and the whole army threw itself on its knees to return thanks to the Almighty giver of victory.

Boabdil spared himself the humiliation of wit-

nessing their entrance. Outside the walls he had met the King and Queen, and performed the acts of homage for the scanty remains of territory which he was still to possess in the Alpuxarras, as a small mountainous tract is called, in which he was still to retain the title and dignity of king. And, as they advanced in royal state to take possession of their new city, he passed on with slow, dejected steps to the small town which was henceforth to be his capital. His road lay over a range of hills, and as he reached their highest point he could not forbear checking his horse, and turning back a last sad look on the stately city which for ten years he had ruled as its king, but which he was never to behold again. "Alas," he said, "what woes were ever equal to mine!" and he burst into tears of unavailing sorrow. The spot on which he halted is still pointed out to the traveller by the peasants of the district, and the peak on which he thus sobbed out his farewell to the scenes of his departed greatness has ever since commemorated his anguish by the name which has been given to it: "El ultimo sospiro del Moro,"—"The last sigh of the Moor."

The reign of Ferdinand and Isabella was

throughout its whole duration one of great success and prosperity. In the years which followed, Spain was often again engaged in war, but Isabella herself was not again called on to array herself in warlike panoply or to expose herself to personal danger. It was, however, her singular good fortune, if we should not rather say that it was the appropriate reward of her singleminded and enthusiastic piety, that, as she had been the moving and animating spirit to whom was chiefly owing the subjugation of the Moors, so it is to her firmness, liberality, and religious zeal that the country, and indeed all Europe, was indebted for the great peaceful triumph of her reign, the achievement with which, above all others, her country and her age are identified—the discovery of America.

It was she who, when Ferdinand showed himself incapable of appreciating the enterprising genius of Columbus, sent forth the great adventurer at her own expense as Queen of Castile; Aragon, her husband's kingdom, having no share in the toil or the glory. And, as one of the inducements which most strongly influenced her to patronise the noble undertaking had been the hope of opening fields

hitherto unknown to the true religion, so, when the triumphant explorer had returned, justly proud of the immortal discoveries which had recompensed his own boldness and her confidence in it, and had brought

“ Worlds unknown before ”

under his mistress's sceptre, one of her first measures was to provide for the instruction of a body of priests in the language of the Indians, that, as missionaries, they might carry the light and blessings of the Gospel to nations hitherto sunk in pagan superstition and barbarism.

But, as the conquest of Granada was more emphatically her own work, so it was that province which to the last was her peculiar care. It was in Granada that she wished her bones to rest, and it is in the great Christian cathedral of Granada that her sepulchre and monument still bear their lasting testimony to her many virtues, and to the deep affection with which her subjects requited them.

*CHARLOTTE, COUNTESS OF ·
DERBY.*

OUR former sketch of an incident in English history was taken from civil war, and, as England is the one happy country in which no foreign invader dares to set a hostile foot, it is only in civil war that Englishwomen can have an opportunity of exhibiting that fortitude to suffer, that courage to resist or to dare, which, when exerted in a pre-eminent degree, earns the title of heroism. Yet, in spite of that safety from foreign enemies which might have been expected to produce general contentment and tranquillity in the nation, even here civil war has too often supplied such opportunities to our countrywomen; and, indeed, the great events which marked the close of the fifteenth and the commencement of the sixteenth century: the invention of printing, which

threw open, as it were, the gates of knowledge to the world, and generated a universal appetite for inquiry and learning ; the discovery of America and of a new road to India, which brought wealth of all kinds in unexampled profusion to Western Europe ; the reformation of religion, which emancipated human thought in other fields, also, besides those of theology ; could hardly fail to produce a general agitation among all ranks and classes in every country, which was but too likely to develop itself in those violent armed contests which constitute civil war.

- Thus, in the latter half of the sixteenth century the champions of the old and new religion in France were arrayed against one another in a series of the most desperate contests. Thus, almost at the same time, a struggle of equal duration and equal fury stript the Spanish sovereign, the great grandson of Ferdinand and Isabella, of the greater and more valuable portion of his Flemish territories. Thus, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, a war, whose mere title, the Thirty Years' War, is of itself an evidence of the widespread and enduring misery which it caused, was kindled in every part of Germany.

And, before its termination, thus too a civil war, not wholly unconnected in its causes with those of the Continent, broke out in England; and in the unexampled atrocity of some of its incidents, the murder of the King and the overthrow of the monarchy, outran all other outbreaks.

We need not dwell upon the causes which led to the war in these islands being thus stamped with a peculiar horror. It is sufficient for the present purpose to point out that, while religion alone had been the pretext abroad, here political grievances occupied the first place, at least in the commencement of the agitation, and in the views of those who were its original fomenters, however they may have subsequently been overborne by worse men. And, finally, after a long period of excitement, in the spring of 1642 the malcontents, assuming the name of the Parliament (though in fact a large party in the House of Commons, and a very decided majority of the House of Lords, disapproved of the measure), broke out into open rebellion, and raised an army for the avowed purpose of making war on the King. • •

It was under these circumstances that the events took place which gave the wife of an

English nobleman a permanent place in the history of the country.

In many counties and districts of the kingdom the feeling in favour of one side or the other was almost unanimous. The metropolis, which in times of commotion had always been a favourer of faction and sedition, with the adjacent or metropolitan counties, espoused the cause of the Parliament; the western and northern districts, Devonshire and Cornwall, Yorkshire and Northumberland, adhered to the King. In Lancashire the parties were divided with something like an equality of strength, and in that important county, therefore, both sides made more than usual efforts to establish a preponderance of power. Manchester was occupied by a garrison of the Parliamentary army. On the other hand, the towns in which the Earl of Derby, one of the most ancient and illustrious of the English nobility, had influence, were steadily loyal to their King. And at no great distance from Manchester the earl possessed a mansion known as Latham House, which, having been built in the Middle Ages, when every baron at times had to trust for his safety to his own power of securing it, was a fortress as

well as a residence, and as such, furnished a rallying point for those who acknowledged him for their chief, or who were wont to look to him for advice or for protection.

It was not, therefore, strange that both on military and political grounds Latham House was regarded as a post of great importance by both parties, or that the Parliamentary officer who commanded the garrison at Manchester conceived that he could not perform a more acceptable office to his friends than its capture. And he anticipated the less difficulty in the accomplishment of such an object, since he was aware that the Earl himself was in the Isle of Man, which also belonged to him, and the careful preservation of which the King himself had enjoined him, and that Lady Derby had been left at Latham with no force but that of a few of her husband's retainers, men not indeed wholly unaccustomed to bear arms, but quite unprovided with means to resist an attack.

Accordingly, in the spring of 1643 he summoned the Countess to surrender Latham and to retire to the Isle of Man. The summons did not take her by surprise, since in the preceding

year he had made a similar demand, though couched in less peremptory language, and, on her refusal, had ravaged her lands, had seized her rents, and had kept the whole district in a state of constant alarm, sending troops of cavalry to patrol even under the very walls of the castle.

But the Countess was not one to be daunted by an impotent display of enmity; she was rather one who took it for a useful warning. Though married to one of the first of English nobles, she was not an Englishwoman herself. She was the daughter of Claude de la Tremoille, Duke of Thouars, in France, one of the most distinguished leaders of the French Huguenots, and her mother was a daughter of that great Prince of Orange known as William the Silent, the heroic champion of Protestantism, who laid the foundation of that resistance to the tyranny of Philip to which allusion has already been made, and which was the first blow given to the predominating influence of Spain in Europe. She may therefore be almost said to have been born and cradled in civil war, and as such not wholly unprepared to meet the Roundhead summons to betray her husband and King as such summons

deserved to be met, with absolute defiance. "It did not suit her to purchase repose at the cost of honour."

She did not, however, disregard it. She profited by it. Though her just rejection of it was not followed by an immediate attempt to give it effect, it was not to be supposed that her enemies would lay aside their purpose; and throughout the winter of 1643, and the first months of 1644, she exerted herself with unceasing energy, and with a judgement which would have done credit to the most experienced veteran, to provide means for resisting the attack which she surely foresaw. She enlisted men; she purchased provisions and ammunition, bringing them in chiefly by night, that her enemies might not be put on their guard or induced to precipitate their operations before she should be in a condition to encounter them; and thus, by March 1644, she had collected a garrison of three hundred men, and stores of all kinds, sufficient to enable her, if besieged, to maintain herself and to keep any assailants at bay till her friends could come to her succour.

Latham House was indeed a stronghold which,

if furnished with a sufficient garrison and well victualled, could offer a stout defence against any besieging force. The walls were high, and six feet thick. Nine projecting towers at equal distances round the whole circumference were armed with fifty-four guns, so placed as to sweep the approaches in every direction. A wide and deep moat, the edges of which were further strengthened with stout palisades, rendered the walls inaccessible to storming parties, while the ground around was of such a character that there were but one or two places on which breaching batteries could be erected sufficiently near to do much damage.

Meanwhile, throughout the autumn and winter of 1643, the war had been carried on with vigour, and on the whole with pretty-equally balanced success, by both parties; but in the southern parts of Yorkshire and Lancashire the Parliamentarians had been gradually increasing their strength, and at the beginning of 1644 their army in this district had been placed under the command of Sir Thomas Fairfax, the officer whose military skill was deservedly esteemed above that of all his brother officers. He could well estimate the importance of Latham, and he had no suspicion

that it was better provided now, or better able to resist a serious attack, than it had been in the preceding summer. He had, he imagined, only to demand its surrender in a tone sufficiently peremptory, and backed with an adequate display of force, to compel submission. And on the second of March he sent two of his aides-de-camp to the castle gates to make the demand.

His own army had been prepared beforehand to look for the instant acquisition of the place, in the manner peculiar to the fanatics of that day. On the previous Sunday the most popular of the army chaplains had taken for his text the verse in Jeremiah, "Put yourself in array against Babylon round about; all ye that bend the bow shoot at her: spare no arrows, for she hath sinned against the Lord." And, after comparing the Countess to Babylon, as described and denounced in the Revelation, had announced that on the following Sunday he should celebrate her overthrow, when his text should be, "Shout against her round about; she hath given her hand: her foundations are fallen; her walls are thrown down."

Shakespeare had told us that

"The man that once did sell the lion's skin
• While the beast lived, was killed in hunting him;"

but the preachers of the Roundheads did not read Shakespeare. The lady too had prepared to receive the embassy, not with empty boasting, but with a display of power to give effect to her resolution which she was not mistaken in expecting to startle her enemies with an unwelcome surprise. Fairfax had had the insolence to require her to visit him in order to treat for the surrender of her house. She had replied that "she had not forgotten her lord's honour and dignity, nor her own birth, and that it was more knightly for Fairfax, who was but a knight, to wait upon her." And as he did not reply to her invitation in person, she resolved to show his messengers that she was not without means to justify her bold defiance. With such skilful secrecy had she reinforced her garrison and collected her supplies, that her operations had wholly escaped the notice of the Parliamentary officers, though their detachments occupied all the surrounding country. But now she desired to impress them with a conviction of her power to resist their utmost malice. And when the aides-de-camp were admitted within the walls, they were disagreeably surprised to see one well equipped company of soldiers filling the courtyard, another

company looking down from the ramparts, which bristled with cannon, and a dignified array of officers forming, as it were, a bodyguard for the Countess herself and her daughter, while preparations in different parts of the castle, which did not escape their notice, gave unstudied evidence of a plentiful supply of necessaries of all kinds.

The discussion was brief. They, on the part of Faixfax, demanded an instant surrender of the house, the only grace offered to the lady being permission to join the Earl in the Isle of Man. She rejected the proposal as unworthy of herself, her husband, and her cause. And both sides prepared for war.

Had Lady Derby needed an example, the war had already furnished her with one, showing how a lady could maintain a castle against rebels, and how little she could trust their honour. In the previous year the Lady Arundel, with a garrison which did not exceed fifty persons of both sexes, had defended Wardour Castle for many days against Sir Edward Hungerford and thirteen hundred men. She had not quitted it till her ammunition and provisions were exhausted and till the besiegers had blown down a great part of

the walls by the explosion of mines. Then at last she was compelled to capitulate : but the conditions of her capitulation had been shamefully violated.

Lady Derby had no inclination to become the victim of similar perfidy. The aides-de-camp had brought back such a report of her means of resistance that Fairfax made more than one attempt to obtain possession of the castle without a conflict. At one time he sought to cajole her with the offer of fair terms ; at another he was not ashamed to employ threats. Lady Derby was neither to be seduced by the one nor alarmed by the other, and her final answer was that " she was ready to abide the utmost violence of her foes, trusting in God for protection and deliverance."

By the end of the first week in March, therefore, Fairfax found that he could have no hope of success save by the usual warlike means of blockade or assault. He might well be confident of the result, for he had three thousand men and an ample train of battering cannon. His design was to employ both expedients, and on the 7th he began to surround the castle with a strong entrenchment, while on the same day his batteries opened fire on the walls. The lady and the garrison, on their part,

were not idle, but kept up a fire as heavy as that of the besiegers by day, and both by day and night made frequent sallies, damaging their entrenchments, and sometimes bringing in prisoners.

Four times a day she gave the enemy and the greater part of her men a brief respite, when with her daughters, her servants, and all the soldiers, except a few sentries whom it would have been too unsafe to remove, she repaired to the chapel of the castle to implore that protection of the God of battles in whom she had expressed her confidence : but for the rest of the twenty-four hours her exertions were as untiring as those of the besiegers, and, as the frequent confusion in their lines made evident, not inferior in effect.

When the siege had lasted a fortnight she was tried with a temptation which might well have shaken a weaker mind. Throughout the whole winter the vigilance of the enemy had cut off all communication between herself and the Earl ; and he, therefore, while he knew the means which the Roundhead generals had provided for the attack of his castle, had been left wholly unacquainted with the resources for its defence which she had accumulated. Her safety was dearer to

him than house or land, and taking it for granted that she could have no means of defending herself for a single week against the overpowering force which Fairfax could bring against her, he humbled himself to write to that general and entreat permission for her to withdraw without molestation. Fairfax sent her her husband's letter, to bring her to submission by such a proof that she had no hope of assistance from without ; but she plainly saw that, had her Earl known how well she was provided, the letter would never have been written, and she replied that "till her husband himself sent her orders to yield, she would never desert the charge which he had confided to her, but would wait for the event according to the will of God."

The Earl, however, was not a man likely to send her such orders : he had only prayed that she might have leave to retire "if it should seem good to her." And on finding that she still held out, he at once crossed back from the Isle of Man to collect a force for her rescue. And she, on her part, fought on with unabated intrepidity and ever increasing fertility of resource. One day, when the ramparts suffered most from the besieger's cannonade, she faced them with wet hides,

to lessen the danger from their fire; on others she sent out parties to attack the batteries themselves, who spiked the guns and brought back many of the artillerymen as prisoners. And every day she visited the sentries and gunners on the walls, brought them food and wine, superintended the distribution of ammunition, and often assisted with her own hands in dressing their wounds or bringing medicines.

Thus, week after week, the siege went on. At the end of April Fairfax himself quitted the trenches to join the principal army of the Round-heads at York, and made over the command to Colonel Rigby, one of the fiercest of his colleagues, and one who seemed to regard the Countess with a personal hatred. Under his command the assaults of the besiegers increased in frequency, the fire of their batteries in vigour. They procured a heavy mortar, which was so skilfully served that on one occasion a shell fell into the dining-room while the Countess was at dinner with her daughters; on another one penetrated into her very bedroom. She changed her apartment for one less exposed to fire, but cheered her garrison with the promise that "the castle itself she would not quit while

a single room in it retained a roof to shelter her head."

Unable to conceive such intrepid fortitude in a woman, Rigby sent her more than one summons to surrender to what he called "the mercy of the Parliament;" but she, receiving his messenger in the presence of the garrison, declared that "so long as her provisions and ammunition held out, so long would she hold out the castle; and, when both were exhausted, she would set fire to goods and house, and she, her children, and her soldiers would perish in the flames, and in them seal their religion and loyalty, rather than yield to rebels and traitors." And her men caught her enthusiasm, and struck terror into the messenger himself by the vociferous cheers with which they took up her words. "We will all die for his Majesty and your honour. God save the King!"

And these were not empty words; at that very moment they were preparing to attack the mortar which was doing them so much injury. And the next morning, before daybreak, two parties of picked men sallied out from the gates. No sortie was ever more skilfully organised; though it had been planned by a woman, nothing was omitted.

One detachment stormed the redoubt which contained the principal battery of cannon; another levelled a ditch and rampart which had been constructed to protect the mortar; a third passed behind the mortar to drive back the artillerymen, whom the tumult had raised from their beds, and who were pouring down to save and serve it; and a fourth fastened ropes to the mortar itself, and dragged it down the slope to the castle gate; while the soldiers who had remained behind lined the walls, and covered their comrades with a fire so skilfully aimed and so well sustained that the efforts of the besiegers to save it only added to their loss.

The castle gate was thrown open, and amid shouts of triumph from the garrison the mortar was dragged into the courtyard. That very day Rigby, confident that its fire could not be resisted for many hours, had invited a company of partisans of the Parliament to his camp to see him take possession, and receive the Countess as his prisoner. He saw instead, herself, her servants, and all the soldiers who could be spared from the walls, marching in devout procession to the castle chapel, to return thanks to God for their success and deliverance.



For, indeed, both parties regarded the capture of the mortar as the termination of the siege. In proportion to the confidence which the besiegers had placed in its efficacy was their dismay at its loss. Many deserted; those who remained in their ranks visibly slackened in their exertions; while, as their courage visibly abated, that of the garrison rose, and during the next four weeks they gave their assailants no rest. Rigby wrote to the governor of Manchester to complain "that he often had now to drive back the sallies of the Countess's soldiers five and six times in a single night; that it was to no purpose that he had doubled the guards in the trenches; that his men were left in a state of constant alarm, and were no longer equal to the work imposed on them;" and to entreat the governor to send him reinforcements. But the letter did not reach Manchester without the garrison in some way or other obtaining intelligence of its contents; and, though the Countess herself needed no additional spur to her resolution, the knowledge of the straits • to which their assailants were reduced naturally encouraged the common soldiers to show greater activity than ever.

Another month passed by. Rigby had almost desisted from assaults, turning the siege into a blockade, in the hope of starving those whom he had no longer any hope of overcoming by fair fighting. And at last, on the 23rd of May, when the siege had lasted eleven weeks, and he flattered himself it was impossible but that the provisions of the garrison must be nearly exhausted, he sent a last embassy to the Countess, requiring her instantly to submit "to the mercy of the Parliament." It was his favourite form of summons. But the lady who had disdained it many weeks before was not more likely to be tempted by it now, when, as she had good reason to know, the distresses of the besiegers far exceeded her own. "The mercies of the wicked are cruel," she replied. And she bade the emissary report to his commander that, unless her lord himself commanded the surrender, he should never take her nor any of her friends alive.

But the Earl's intentions were widely different. Though he had been unable to send her intelligence of his movements, ever since he returned from the Isle of Man he had been unwearied in his efforts to collect a force sufficient to break through the

lines of the besiegers and to succour his noble-hearted wife. And fortune had now come to his aid. Prince Rupert, the most enterprising of all the royalist generals, had just driven off from Newark a Roundhead army which had threatened that important town, and was marching from Nottinghamshire to join the Duke of Newcastle, the commander-in-chief of the King's army at York, when Lord Derby persuaded him to turn aside a little from his intended line of march to rescue his wife, and to save a stronghold of such value to Charles, and, as the efforts which they had made for its reduction proved, of at least equal importance in the eyes of the officers of the Parliament.*

The task proposed to him, the deliverance of a noble lady, was of itself sufficient to recommend it to a warrior of so chivalrous a spirit as Rupert. And on the evening of the same day on which Lady Derby had dismissed Rigby's last aide-de-camp with scorn, a more acceptable messenger made his way to her with the tidings that Prince and Earl were both at Chester, and were marching with an irresistible force to the relief of Latham.

The news was not much longer in reaching Rigby

also. And, when the royal army arrived, it found no besiegers to drive away: the Roundhead battalions had retreated in haste to Bolton-le-Moors; and Prince and Earl found the gates of Latham thrown open, with the unconquered Countess at the head of her men waiting to give them a triumphant reception in the courtyard of the castle, and, as the first duty to be performed, to conduct them to the castle chapel, that in their company she might once more offer up prayers, now to be mingled with thanks for her deliverance.

The defence of Latham House was one of the last successes which cheered the King for whom it had been preserved. The importance of Latham as a fortress had been so clearly demonstrated, that skilful engineers were at once sent by the Royalist generals to repair the injuries which it had sustained, and to strengthen it against any future attack. And the danger which these preparations seemed to forbode soon fell upon it. The siege had hardly been raised a month when the fatal day of Marston Moor gave the armies of the Parliament an ascendancy which they never afterwards lost. And one of the results of that decisive battle was the renewal of the siege

of Latham House. In some respects the castle was stronger than before. Its ramparts had been made higher, its guns were heavier. But Lady Derby was not present a second time to rouse the garrison to the extraordinary efforts of endurance and enterprise which had saved it from the first attack. She, with her husband, had retired to the Isle of Man. And, though the new governor, who had borne an honourable share in her defence, did no discredit to his former reputation, but again set himself to maintain his post with great skill and vigour, he lacked the force of character which in the Countess had made her little garrison perform what, if they had not been performed, might have been called impossibilities.

Distressed by want of provisions, and hopeless of succour, the soldiers rose on their commander and compelled him to surrender. And the conquerors took care Latham should never be in a condition to give them trouble again. Its ramparts were thrown down, its towers rased, its guns carried off; and only a few sheds and outhouses were left to show where a woman with a handful of soldiers had for nearly three months kept at bay, and finally defeated, ten times her numbers.

We need not tell of the eventual ruin of the royal cause, of the overthrow of the throne itself, nor of the brave but unsuccessful efforts made by the second Charles to re-establish it. To no one did the failure of those efforts bring more misery than to the noble lady whose virtues we have been attempting to describe. The Earl left her in the Isle of Man when, in August, 1651, he set forth to raise among his Lancashire tenants a troop for the service of his new sovereign. He had to fight his way, nor was it without more than one fierce combat, nor without receiving a severe wound, that he at last succeeded in joining his royal master at Worcester. But the very next day the hopes of the royalists were finally crushed by the most decisive victory which Cromwell had gained.

The Earl was among the prisoners, and prisoners of war, by every law of honourable warfare, were safe. But, to use the expression of Clarendon, "the Parliament renewed their old method of murdering in cold blood," and erected a tribunal before which they brought him to trial for fighting for his King, to which his judges gave the name of treason and rebellion. Before such a court, trial and condemnation were the same thing. And by

its sentence Lord Derby was put to death at Bolton, the same town out of which he had formerly driven Rigby and the besiegers of Latham.

Even this irreparable calamity, and as such she felt it, did not abate courage of his widow, nor her fidelity to the cause for which he had died. The victorious Cromwell sent a force against the Isle of Man, under the command of the same Colonel Rigby who had besieged Latham. And Lady Derby prepared to defend the island with as stout a resolution as she had shown in Lancashire ; but she had to contend with a foe unknown at Latham : with internal treachery. Captain William Christian, to whom the Earl himself had entrusted the command of the military force within the island, basely betrayed his trust, and delivered up not only the island, but the Countess herself and her children as prisoners.

She was now reduced to great distress, for her conquerors had seized her revenues ; and she was often indebted to friends only one degree less unfortunate than herself for the barest means of support. Her chief comfort was the memory of her husband's virtues and affection for her, on which, as her correspondence shows, she ever fondly

dwelt; and had she been capable of mingling a selfish thought with such recollections, she might have found further consolation in the respect with which she herself was held by all whose esteem or approval was honour. Her one hope was that she might live to see the restoration to his throne of the king for whom her husband had died. For that event, to use her own words, "she had prayed with tears;" and that she was spared to see. But she did not long survive it.

She had not passed the confines of middle age, but toil and anxiety had broken down her constitution before her time, and in 1664 she died, leaving behind her a fame, such as those of her sex who are in the rank of subjects rarely have the opportunity of earning: the fame of having not only done honour to her race, but by public service having deserved well of her country.

MARIA TERESA,
EMPRESS-QUEEN OF GERMANY, HUNGARY, AND
BOHEMIA, AND ARCH-DUCHESS OF AUSTRIA.

WE pass over nearly a century of time, and find our next heroine in a country of which we have previously had no occasion to make mention. But virtue and courage are monopolized by no one nation, nor are they the characteristics of any single age. The eighty years which elapsed after the restoration of Charles II. of England to his ancestral throne were marked by long and sanguinary wars. The wanton and aggressive ambition of Louis XIV., throughout the whole period of his long reign, disturbed the tranquillity of every country in Europe. And, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, his lawless violation of recent treaties united England in close alliance with the German Empire.

It was in support of the pretensions of Charles, the sixth German Emperor of that name, to the Spanish throne that the British armies carried their victorious standards from the Scheldt to the Danube. And, when he died, in the autumn of 1740, the British ministers and the nation in general showed that they had not forgotten the alliance, or the glories with which its memories were linked, by the warm interest which all classes in the kingdom took in the fortunes of his daughter.

Charles had left no son, and the imperial dignity was one which could not descend to a female heir. His eldest daughter and heiress, Maria Teresa, a princess twenty-four years of age, was, however, married to Francis, Duke of Lorraine; and, had Charles been endowed with ordinary foresight, or rather, had he not deliberately rejected the precautions of which he foresaw the importance, in favour of hopes which it was disgraceful to him to entertain, he might easily have secured to Francis the succession to the imperial throne, by procuring for him, during his own lifetime, the title of King of the Romans, which the Electors would have made no difficulty about con-

ferring on him. But he neglected or refused to do so, and his death consequently left the crown of the Cæsars a prize open to competition, as it had never been since his ancestor, Charles of Spain, was preferred to the French and English sovereigns. His conduct was the more unaccountable, or the more unjustifiable, because, from the number of intermarriages which in the last two or three generations had taken place between German princesses and foreign princes, there was scarcely a sovereign in Europe who could not advance pretensions to be recognised as the heir of the imperial family. And he therefore could not doubt that by leaving, as he did, the empire to be the prize of contending factions, he was preparing for his daughter a train of troubles and difficulties, if not of misfortunes. Indeed the moment that Charles died other competitors for the imperial crown did enter the lists with her husband, one of

¹ According to Coxe (House of Austria, c. 96) the Empress his wife, and all his ministers, had repeatedly entreated him, to obtain this dignity, which was, in fact, a formal recognition of a right of succession to the Empire for his son-in-law; but he had rejected their counsels because, "considering the death of the Empress as a more probable event (than his own), he entertained hopes of male issue by a future marriage."

whom succeeded in the contest. Yet, so strange as well as so hard was her fortune, that her husband's defeat, however mortifying, was not the greatest disaster which she had to endure, and that the heaviest blows which fell upon her were entirely unconnected with the succession to the empire, and would not have been averted if Duke Francis had been in undisputed possession of all her father's dignity and power. It may be added that they did, however, arise, in some degree from an act of her grandfather which he probably expected to bear very different fruit.

Among the privileges or prerogatives which confessedly belonged to the imperial authority was that of from time to time erecting the smaller principalities of the empire into kingdoms. And in the exercise of this authority the Emperor Leopold, in the first year of the century, had conferred on Frederic, Margrave and Elector of Brandenburg, the title of King of Prussia. He probably flattered himself that he was binding the new royal family to his own by ties of gratitude. In the view taken of the act by the grandson of the Elector thus promoted, he was "planting the seeds of ambition in the bosom of its members,

which sooner or later would be sure to bear abundant fruit.”

And he who thus described it was now in a position to prove the accuracy of his description. His father, the second King of Prussia, had died six months before the Emperor; and he, having succeeded him by the title of Frederic II., hereafter to be exchanged for the more generally known appellation of Frederic the Great, was meditating various designs by which he might extend his power, or at least his celebrity (of which he was almost equally desirous), when the opportunity for which he was searching was somewhat unexpectedly offered to him by the Emperor's death. For Charles was only fifty-five years old, and of a constitution which seemed to promise him a long life.

Frederic at once saw the opportunity which was thus opened to him. Besides the obligations under which Leopold had laid the house of Brandenburg generally, he himself was bound by private ties of the strongest kind to the late Emperor, since he had owed his own liberty, if not his life, to that monarch's intercession with

Frederic William. And he himself had, moreover, entered into a formal engagement, confirmed by the most solemn oaths, to maintain the claims of Maria Teresa and her husband to every part of her father's authority. But no considerations of that kind weighed with him for a moment against the advantages to be gained by disregarding them. So far was he from being influenced by feelings of gratitude or honour, that in his autobiography, the work of his declining years, when a lengthened experience of the vicissitudes of life might have been expected to render him more distrustful than youth is apt to be of the results of unbounded and unscrupulous ambition, he was not ashamed to enumerate, among the principal temptations for violating his engagements to Charles, the fact that she who had inherited his dominions was "a youthful and inexperienced princess, surrounded by difficulties of all kinds, from the disorganisation of her army, the embarrassment of her finances, and the disunion of her ministers."

These circumstances, and he does not overstate them, might well have been thought to give Maria Teresa an additional claim on his support. In

Frederic's own view they furnished an irresistible inducement to declare himself her enemy.

Among her dominions was the province of Silesia, to a portion of which his family had at one time had some pretensions, but all title to which they had formally renounced, or rather sold to the reigning Emperor for a sufficient payment, in the latter part of the preceding century. Frederic now resolved to revive the claim, and to forget the receipt of the purchase-money. And with such rapidity did he form his resolution and act upon it, that within six weeks of the Emperor's death his ambassador arrived at Vienna with an imperious demand for the instant cession of Silesia, and a threat of immediate war if the demand were refused. And, unprecedented as such conduct was, the threat of war came after the commencement of it, for the Prussian army had already been set in motion.

A strange greeting for a young queen on her accession to receive from one who ought to have been her most eager champion and ally, was this demand that she should purchase his support by the cession of a province. And she was in that condition which, for a time, specially disqualifies

her sex from encountering agitation of any kind, and especially any of an alarming nature : she was about to become a mother. But she encountered the insolent demand with as much firmness as if she had nothing to impair her strength or shake her nerves. And fortunately her husband was worthy of her, and one who could support her resolution with his own. She was aware that, even before the ambassador, Count Gotter, the Grand Marshal of Prussia, had reached Vienna, the Prussian army had entered Silesia, and therefore, while it remained there, she positively refused to grant him any audience at all ; while Duke Francis, whom Frederic had hoped to tempt by the promise of support in his candidature for the imperial dignity, in an informal conversation with the Count, held language equally unyielding. " Tell your master," said he, " that while he has a man in Silesia the Queen and I will rather perish than enter into any discussion with him. And as for myself, not for the imperial crown nor for all Europe will I sacrifice one of the Queen's rights, not one inch of her lawful possessions."

She therefore prepared for war, which he had already commenced. It was characteristic of a

Prince who, like Frederic, when discussing his pretensions with the British ambassador, openly repudiated every notion of honour and magnanimity, that he should similarly discard all considerations of religion, and every pretence of looking for the favour of the Almighty. The motto hitherto borne on the Prussian standards was, "For God and the country." On sending forth his troops to invade Silesia he caused the two first words to be effaced. "God," he said, "had nothing to do with men's quarrels or the wars of kings. He was going to fight for a province, and not for religion."

At the same time he did not disdain to work upon the superstition of his subjects. As he was quitting Berlin to join the army, the great bell of the cathedral fell to the ground, and its fall was generally regarded by the citizens as an evil omen. Frederic knew well how often such fears tend to realise themselves; but Decius Brutus was not more ingenious in his explanation of Calpurnia's dream than he showed himself now.

"This dream is all amiss interpreted;

It was a vision fair and fortunate."

As he explained it to the Berliners, "the fall of the bell denoted the abasement of the high. And,

as the House of Austria was at present infinitely higher than that of Brandenburg, it very clearly indicated the advantages which the latter should obtain." His comment on this interpretation in his autobiography is that "whoever is acquainted with the populace knows that such reasons are very sufficient and convincing."

And in truth the contest was an unequal one, and one which could scarcely have any result but the aggrandisement of the lawless invader at the expense of the comparatively helpless Queen. For Frederic had correctly estimated her difficulties: the inefficient state of the Austrian army, the emptiness of the Austrian treasury; while he himself had succeeded to vast hoards which his father had been steadily accumulating throughout his entire reign, and to a numerous and perfectly equipped military force, the organisation of which had been the only object for which Frederic William could ever be induced to break through the rules of his rigorous parsimony.

It may perhaps be said that fortune was never so equally balanced as at first; since Frederic had relied so fully on the Queen's consciousness of her own weakness, and therefore on her

instant submission, that he had led into Silesia a force very little more numerous than that which the Austrian commander, Count Neupperg, assembled to resist him, and since he himself was far from being as yet possessed of the tactical skill which experience subsequently gave him. Yet even in the first battle Neupperg was decisively defeated.

And the consequences of the defeat were not confined to the loss of standards, guns, and prisoners: it added to the number of the Queen's enemies. The Elector of Bavaria at once threw in his lot with Frederic, not without hope of extending his own principality also at the Queen's expense. France prepared to enter the lists as an ally of Bavaria. And, though George II. of England proposed to take part with Maria Teresa, the assistance which he gave her consisted only of a small sum of money, which was cordially voted by the British Parliament, and a letter of advice which was not wholly disinterested, and in which he counselled her to purchase peace by the cession of any territories in Silesia or the Netherlands.

• Troubles were thickening around Maria Teresa. As she refused to yield, Frederic, encouraged by the alliance of France, increased his demands; .

the Prince of Bavaria, who was elected Emperor in the course of the summer, rose in his pretensions also, till he claimed Austria itself, assumed the title of Archduke, and, invading the duchy, threatened to lay siege to Vienna. But the more hopeless did the Queen's situation seem, the more indomitable was the courage with which she faced her perils.

Of all the subject nations which made up her dominions Hungary was the most warlike, and it was also that in whose faithful devotion she had the greatest confidence. To the loyalty of the Hungarians, therefore, she resolved to appeal, and in the old-fashioned barbaric pomp of a Hungarian coronation there was much to excite the enthusiasm of a people attached above most other nations to their ancient institutions. She appointed her coronation, therefore, to take place at Presburg, at Midsummer; and, though still in delicate health, she bore her part with unrivalled and fascinating dignity in all the antiquated ceremonies of the day, which were as dear to the subjects as they were fatiguing to the sovereign.

It was an imposing spectacle when, surrounded by all the nobility and chivalry of the kingdom,

glistening with barbaric pearl and gold, she bent her beautiful head to receive from the primate the ancient iron crown of St. Stephen: it was a scene of splendour and joy not readily to be forgotten, when she afterwards presided at the public banquet in the great hall of the palace, and, as the heat compelled her to lay aside her crown, gladdened all the spectators with her unveiled beauty. But grander than coronation pomp or royal feast was the spectacle which, from the elevated ground on which it was exhibited, all Presburg could behold, when she presently girded on a sword, mounted a war horse, and riding at the head of her nobles up the ascent known to all Hungarians as the King's Hill, brandished her sword, and pointing it east and west, north and south, challenged all the world to invade the rights and privileges of Hungary.

That day for ever bound to her the hearts of the Hungarians. It was to be followed by one, if possible, still more imposing and affecting. The coronation had been a show to win the affections of the populace. It was necessary for her also to appeal to the reason and judgment of the leaders of the nation; she convened the States of the kingdom,

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proposing, as such a crisis called for extraordinary exertions, to address them herself, instead of trusting to the more prepared eloquence of her Chancellor.

Her mere appearance as she entered the council hall, and, still clad in deep mourning for her father, and bearing in her arms her infant son, the heir of her greatness, marched with stately step to the throne at the upper end, was of itself sufficient powerfully to excite the feelings of the councillors. But more exciting still was the brief address in which she appealed to their patriotism and loyalty. Latin was still the language used in the Hungarian Diet, and her very words have been preserved in the national archives.¹

“The depressed condition of our affairs has induced us to bring before the faithful States of our most dear kingdom of Hungary the fact of the invasion of our hereditary province of Austria, and of the danger which impends over this kingdom also. The kingdom of Hungary, our own person,

¹ Coxe copied them by the permission, as he states, of Count Koller, keeper of the archives, who was present at the Diet.

our child, our crown, all are at stake. Deserted by every one, we fly, as our only refuge, to the loyalty of these illustrious States, to the arms and ancient valour of the Hungarians. I earnestly exhort you, my States, and each of your orders, in this great danger, to take with all speed measures for the safety of our person, our children, our crown, and kingdom; and in everything that depends on ourselves, in everything in which we can contribute to maintain the ancient prosperity of this kingdom, and the honour of the nation, our faithful States shall see our royal goodness and liberality ungrudgingly excited."

Brief as the speech was, the councillors could hardly wait for the end; at her mention of her child and her crown the whole assembly rose to their feet, half drew their swords, and returned them to their scabbards with a warlike clang; and while many a manly eye was wet with tears, and though many a manly voice faltered with emotion, replied to her harangue with one unanimous shout, "Let us die for our Sovereign, Maria Teresa!"

She had judged well in being her own spokeswoman; she had shown herself to be one of those

born rulers of men whose words, or even whose glance, are powerful to sway the mind, to excite enthusiasm, and to attach affection. And the impression which she this day made on the councillors of one of her States, spread with rapid contagion throughout the rest also; was proof against the lapse of time; and stood unshaken by disaster, if we may not even say that it was strengthened by the proof which disaster elicited of the immovable fortitude with which she bore up against misfortune, and the fertile courage with which she ever sought to remedy and to retrieve it.

And it was well that in the years which succeeded she had this personal attachment and loyalty of her subjects to rely on, for Frederic was in every point of view a formidable enemy: formidable from his grasping ambition, and for the resolution and daily increasing military skill with which he prosecuted his ambitious projects; and perhaps still more formidable for the inveterate and shameless faithlessness with which he broke through engagements and treaties almost before the ink with which they were signed was dry. A second Prussian victory compelled Maria Teresa



MAJOR FRANKLIN, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF THE AMERICAN NOBLES.

to submit to a treaty which was to a certain extent a compromise, since by it Frederic abated somewhat of his original demands, and engaged never to renew them; while she, on her part, ceded a portion of the territory, the preservation of the whole of which had been the object of her engaging in war.

Frederic, when he signed the treaty, was fully resolved to renew the war, and all that Maria Teresa really gained by it was a respite to turn her arms against another enemy, whose pretensions were more dangerous, though his means of enforcing them were far inferior to those of the King of Prussia. The Elector of Bavaria had not been content with threatening Vienna, but, when he found that the prompt measures which she had taken for its defence had rendered that important metropolis safe from his attack, had laid claim to her kingdom of Bohemia also, had surprised Prague, the capital, and had compelled the primate and nobles to crown him as their King. And this acquisition had secured his election as Emperor, in which character he celebrated a second coronation at Frankfort, in February, 1742.

But the conclusion of the peace with Prussia,

hollow as it really was, gave Maria Teresa time to prove to this prince that his ambition far exceeded his strength; that the imperial crown brought him no power, while that of Bohemia was a delusion to lure him to disaster. While he was gratifying his vanity with empty parade at Frankfort, she despatched an army into his hereditary province, occupied Bavaria itself, and captured Munich, his capital, on the very day of his coronation as Emperor.

Frederic at once renewed the war. He saw that the employment of a large portion of the Austrian army in Bavaria would enable him to extort further concessions of territory; and though by the recent treaty he had engaged never to demand them, he threw his promises and obligations to the wind, invaded the Queen's dominions, and won another battle. But the war was of as short a duration as the previous peace. In less than three months another treaty extended the territories which the Queen was compelled to surrender; and again the allies of Prussia had cause to complain that Frederic regarded their interests as little as his own honour.

Profiting by the fresh respite, the Queen turned

her whole force to the recovery of Bohemia. Prague was now held by a strong French garrison, in alliance with the new Emperor; but she drove out French and Bavarians, and compelled them both to an ignominious and disastrous retreat; and in May, 1743, she was herself crowned Queen of Bohemia, extorting by her success the admiration of Frederic himself, who in his memoirs openly confesses that it was the reward of a courage and firmness equal to his own, and who, as he believed his genius and wit as a poet not inferior to his wisdom as a ruler or his skill as a commander, is equally careful to record the epigrams on the French marshals by which he solaced himself for the disasters of his allies.*

Justly elated, the Queen believed it now in her power to give the French a lesson which should cure them of interfering in German affairs, and she carried the war into the territories of Louis himself, sending her brother-in-law, Charles of Lorraine, to overrun Alsace; and she even meditated attempting the recovery of Lorraine, which her husband had been compelled on his marriage to exchange for Tuscany.

Frederic himself became alarmed by the rapidity

of her successes. If she should establish herself on the west of the Rhine by the recovery of Lorraine, she might be able to recover also some of the territories which he himself had gained from her; and, though he did not pretend any provocation except such as was to be found in his own apprehensions, for the third time he declared war against her, and poured his troops into Bohemia.

It was the most formidable attack to which she had yet been exposed, for Frederic had employed the late interval of peace in extending his diplomatic connections, and had now formed a confederacy against her in which the Palatinate and several others of the smaller German States arrayed themselves on his side.

Unexpected as the storm was, she prepared to meet it with unabated courage. Hungary was still her mainstay, and again she repaired to Presburg, to rouse the Hungarians in her defence. As before, she made a personal appeal to the Diet; and, as before, the prelates and statesmen and citizens were stirred up by her voice to as eager an enthusiasm as the most fiery warriors. As one of the foreign ambassadors who was present

expressed himself, "She possessed the art of making every man about her a hero."

This third war was almost as brief as that which had preceded it, and it was more chequered in its fortunes. The Queen succeeded in driving Frederic himself with heavy loss out of Bohemia; and though he retrieved that disgrace by brilliant victories at Hohenfriedberg and Sohr, he found that he had strained the resources of his kingdom to the utmost extent that they could bear, and the peace which at the end of 1745 finally terminated the struggle between them was even more of a compromise than the first treaty of 1742.

The Emperor had died, his chief malady being supposed to be chagrin at the disastrous result of his quarrels with the Queen. And if Maria Teresa purchased peace by some additional cession of territory in Silesia, Frederic may no less be said to have purchased it too by pledging himself to support Duke Francis, her husband, in his candidature for the vacant empire. This vote secured his election, and, in October, 1745, the Queen had the triumph of seeing her proudest wish gratified, and the imperial crown

restored to her family, from which, for above three hundred years, it had never been diverted, with the exception of the short period which had elapsed since the death of her father.

Voltaire has called the years of peace which now ensued the golden age of modern Europe. From St. Petersburg to Cadiz, the commerce of every country was extended; every art and science was honoured and fostered; the condition of all classes was improved, and Europe appeared like one large family, happily reunited after a painful series of domestic quarrels.

The picture is perhaps a little too highly coloured. It is at all events certain that throughout the whole period more than one nation which seemed so tranquil was anticipating a rupture, and indeed was resolved to bring it about at the first moment that the opportunity should seem favourable. And for this renewal of the strife none was so eager as Maria Teresa herself, the Empress-Queen as she was called after the imperial crown had been placed on her husband's head. She had never forgotten the treacherous and unprovoked attack made on her by Frederic in the first month of her reign,

nor did she ever for a moment waver in her resolution to strike at least one more blow for the recovery of the province which had been wrested from her.

Full of this design, she had paid unceasing attention to improving the organisation both of her army and of her finances. She had formed camps in different provinces, in which the soldiers were carefully trained in the newest manoeuvres, and to which she herself paid frequent visits, securing the men's attachment both to herself and to their profession by liberal rewards. As Frederic himself records his opinion, "She understood better than any sovereign of her time the value which honours and distinctions bear in the soldiers' eyes." And she founded a military school at Vienna, to which the highest nobles of the empire were encouraged to send their sons for instruction in every branch of military knowledge. She had also exerted all her diplomatic skill to gain over allies in all quarters, and thus, as far as might be, to isolate Frederic when the hour of conflict should return.

It came sooner than she had expected, and in this last object Frederic himself proved her most

useful assistant. The alliances which were most desirable both for her and for him were clearly those with France and Russia. The value of the friendship of France had been proved by Prussia in the previous war, while Russia, as the neighbour of Prussia along a great portion of her frontier, had greater facilities than any other country for harassing her eastern provinces.

In all policy, therefore, Frederic should have studied the feelings and inclinations of the rulers of those countries; but there were none, on the contrary, towards whom he seemed to make a greater point of displaying his contempt and ill-will. Both undoubtedly afforded a fair mark for his sarcasms. The profligacy of the Russian Empress Elizabeth was scarcely disguised; the weakness of the French monarch, the mere tool of the most worthless favourites of both sexes, was even more notorious. And both were the most favourite butts for Frederic's wit; and the bitter sayings which day after day he launched against both courts were circulated throughout Europe.

Both Russia and France therefore were well prepared to listen to the overtures which the

sagacious Empress-Queen instructed her ministers to make. She was willing to strengthen France with some of her Flemish fortresses, if by the aid of the French armies she could recover Silesia. The aid of Poland and Saxony it was still more easy to obtain. And thus, at the beginning of 1756, a coalition was formed, before which those who had negotiated might be excused for thinking that Prussia must fall.

But Frederic had a stout heart as well as Maria Teresa, and the treaty which she had made with France did of itself secure him the alliance of England. And with this single friend, and the advantage of his central position, he prepared to encounter the various attacks which were about to fall on him from all sides. The war now about to commence is known as the Seven Years' War. And the very first battle gave proof of the great improvement which the wise care of the Empress-Queen had effected in the quality of the Austrian troops since the two nations had last met.

Frederic was at all times rapid in his movements, and knew well the political advantages to be derived from striking the first blow. In October, 1756, he attacked the Austrian general at Lowositz,

in Bohemia ; and though his own superiority in tactical skill secured him the victory, it was little more than a nominal triumph which he gained. His own losses exceeded those of the enemy, and, as he told one of his most trusted officers, they were not the Austrians of old with whom he now had to deal. Subsequent conflicts proved this more clearly. No war of equal duration has ever been marked with a greater number of pitched battles ; and not only was he compelled to confess a defeat at least as often as he could boast of a victory, but in some of those defeats he sustained at least as heavy losses as the very worst which he had inflicted. One led to the capture of his own capital, Berlin ; another was so overwhelming that for some hours he resolved not to survive it, but prepared to end his life by his own hand, and drew up a paper of regulations and advice for the nephew who was his heir.

But it would be superfluous here to describe in detail the incidents of Rosbach and Lissa, glorious to Prussia as they were, or of Kolin and Kunersdorf, which were in at least an equal degree disastrous to her. It is sufficient for our purpose to point out how completely the judicious superintendence which

Maria Teresa had exerted over the military affairs of her empire, though such were not usually considered as falling within a woman's province, had restored to her army all its old reputation and efficiency; so that, although in the first war against Frederic almost every battle was an Austrian disaster, in the second the skill and courage displayed on each side, and the fortune also, were equal. And when in 1763 the exhaustion of all the combatants brought about a restoration of peace, though she did not succeed in recovering Silesia, the fruit of the King's victories in the former wars, she compelled him to restore everything that he had since acquired from her allies, and to give his voice for the continuance of the imperial dignity in her family, by the formal recognition of her son's right of succession.

And perhaps a more practical testimony to the degree in which her vigorous care had augmented the power of her kingdoms is afforded by Frederic's conduct more than twenty years afterwards, when, on the death of the Elector of Bavaria, Maria Teresa, in her double character of Queen of Bohemia and Archduchess of Austria, claimed some important provinces of that electorate.

Frederic had not forgotten his old jealousy of and enmity to Austria : one who has done an injury rarely forgives his victim ; and Frederic, who had begun his reign by an unjust spoliation of her dominions, could not without bitter discontent contemplate the prospect of her now making acquisitions, even though they were not to be at his expense. He threatened war, and put his armies in motion. But he found the Austrian force stronger than his own ; he made no attempt to strike a single blow ; but after many months of bluster and impotent displays of ill-will, he withdrew his troops, and allowed his old antagonist to round off her dominions by the addition of a district which, as strengthening their frontier on the side on which it was most assailable, was no inadequate compensation for Silesia.

The acquisition thus made was almost her last act. After the conclusion of the Seven Years' War her life, though one of still uninterrupted benefit to her country, was also one in which personal happiness was chequered, if not outweighed, by heavy sorrows. It was well that the succession of her son Joseph to the empire had been so early settled, for the same year that witnessed his

election as King of the Romans saw his father carried off by apoplexy, without her having even the melancholy comfort of closing his eyes. And, as their union had been one of mutual choice and unalloyed confidence and affection, the affliction of his widow was deep, sincere and lasting. Nor, though she was fondly attached to her son, could it fail to be an aggravation of her distress to contemplate the unworthy admiration which, from the moment of his accession, Joseph displayed for the persevering enemy of his family, and the eagerness with which, in deference to him, he promoted the iniquitous partition of Poland.

The feelings with which Maria Teresa herself regarded this most shameless of all aggressions are portrayed in her letter to her minister Kaunitz: a letter from which even the unflinching advocate of her enemy Frederic cannot withhold his panegyric as "beautiful, faithful, wholesome, well-becoming a high and true sovereign-woman." "When all her lands were invaded, and she knew not where she could find a place for her son to be born in," she reminded him, "she had relied on her good right and the help of God. Now, when not only

public law cried out to heaven against this measure, but all natural justice and sound reason also, she was in such trouble as she had never before felt, and was ashamed to show her face." She urged Kaunitz to reflect "what an example the empire would be giving to the world, if for a miserable piece of Poland it threw honour and reputation to the winds. But she saw that she was alone: her strength was gone, and she had now no power to prevent what she condemned, and from which she foreboded nothing but evil."

In one matter fortune was merciful to her. If there was one transaction of the latter years of her reign which she regarded with unalloyed satisfaction, it was the marriage of her youngest and fairest daughter to the virtuous Dauphin. She was mercifully spared the knowledge of the misery which, as its fruit, was in store for that, the dearest of her children. Toil and anxiety had made her old before her time, and in the autumn of 1780, though she had only recently celebrated her sixty-third birthday, she died at Vienna after a short illness.

No sovereign of any age or country has been inspired with a worthier idea of the duties of

royalty. Her letters to Marie Antoinette at Paris, who was still little more than a child when her husband succeeded his grandfather on the throne of France, are a perfect manual for princes. To set in every respect a good example to all around them; to make the happiness of every class of their subjects their principal study, are in her view the only foundation of true glory. And the veneration with which she herself was regarded throughout her whole reign by her own subjects of every province and every rank bears evidence to their conviction that these maxims had ever been the rule of her life. The British ambassador at Vienna reported to his Court that the whole capital was plunged into "heartfelt affliction" by her death, and no sovereign need desire a nobler epitaph.

FLORA MACDONALD.

IN the first of the wars which Frederic of Prussia waged against Maria Teresa, the English ministers, though in alliance with the Queen, were prevented from giving her all the assistance on which she might reasonably have calculated by the strife of party and faction which prevailed in their own kingdom, and which ultimately found its development in a formidable insurrection. The joy with which Lady Derby had hailed the restoration of her legitimate sovereign, and which at the time was fully shared by the great bulk of the nation, was gradually changed into as general discontent by the misgovernment of Charles and the still more open violations of the constitution by his brother and successor, James II., till at last a fresh revolution drove James from the kingdom, and established a new dynasty on the throne.

The revolution of 1688 was regarded with different feelings in different parts of Great Britain. In England, where the increased security for civil and religious liberty which it provided predominated over all other considerations, it was after a time cheerfully acquiesced in by a great majority of all classes. But among the Scotch a sentiment of national pride outweighed the more practical views of statesman-like policy. They had felt the national importance increased by the accession of a Scottish monarch to the English throne. They continued to regard the Stuart kings as peculiarly their own countrymen, and felt their expulsion and dethronement as a national injury which they were bound to take every favourable opportunity of redressing.

James himself had died at the beginning of the eighteenth century; but they made one attempt to bring back his son when the accession of a new sovereign from Hanover, who was a stranger to Englishmen as well as Scotchmen, seemed to render it probable that he would find but a lukewarm support from any portion of his new subjects. And though that insurrection had

been instantly quelled and sternly chastised, yet, when thirty years afterwards the flower of the English army was engaged on the Continent, warring against Frederic's French allies, the temptation to take advantage of its absence from England was irresistible.

The Scotch clans once more rose in support of the claims of the Prince whom they still regarded as their hereditary and rightful sovereign ; and his son and heir, Charles Edward, Prince of Wales, as he was called by those who denied the right of George II. to the title of king, crossed over from France to put himself at their head. The force which the chiefs had been able to raise for his service was far smaller than he had been led, or rather than he had excited himself, to expect. Even when reinforced to the utmost it scarcely exceeded six thousand men : yet for some time his success and progress was such as to realize his most sanguine expectations.

It was the last week of July, 1745, when he landed in the Highlands. In less than two months he had defeated the only English army in Scotland, had captured Edinburgh, and held a court in the ancient palace of his ancestors,

Holyrood, celebrated for many a splendid festival and many a fearful tragedy. In two months more he had traversed the northern counties of England, and had established his head-quarters at Derby, within less than a week's march of the capital of the kingdom. The Hanoverian dynasty seemed tottering to its fall, unless the King's son, the Duke of Cumberland, who commanded the English troops in the Netherlands, and who had been summoned back in haste with the flower of his army, should be able to arrest his progress. But with his return to English soil the hopes of the young prince vanished.

To advance further was to be surrounded and overpowered by superior numbers. He had no resource but to retreat to Scotland, for the almost hopeless chance of being able still to maintain so bold a front as to bring the government which he attacked to a treaty. But that hope, if indeed he ever seriously entertained it, soon proved to be delusive. Even one or two advantages which he gained over his pursuers only increased his difficulties. By sowing the seeds of disunion among his supporters, who in many instances were rival councillors, inspired by mutual jealousy and dis-

trust. And in April whatever hopes he till that time had cherished were finally extinguished on the field of Culloden.

He had but five thousand men; the English army doubled his in numbers, and was even more superior to it in equipment and discipline. The Highlanders fought bravely, but were soon overpowered. Soon one small battalion was all that preserved its order, and Charles Edward prepared to put himself at its head, and in one final charge to endeavour to retrieve the fortune of the day, if so it might be, or, if fortune should continue to frown, to perish at its head, as became a prince who was fighting for a kingdom. But his most trusted adherents viewed his purpose with dismay. In their eyes his safety was an object of far greater importance than the protraction, or even the gaining of a single battle. If he should perish, all hope would be gone. But if he were saved, it might still be possible to collect another army and renew the contest. And, sorely against his will, they forced him from the field.

But all such hope was soon abandoned. The overthrow was soon seen to be past all retrieval.

And now the whole energy of the vanquished Prince, and of those who had hoped again to call themselves his father's subjects, was directed to secure his escape from the vengeance of the government which he had so sorely alarmed and shaken. It could not fail to be a most arduous task. The whole country around, in every direction, was occupied by the victorious English army, and the Duke of Cumberland, a man at all times of pitiless temper, and whose habitual sternness was aggravated by a feeling of personal enmity against the young Prince as the assailant of his father's throne, was urging on the search for him with the most rigorous diligence. Every sea-port was watched, every ship and boat was searched, while the enormous reward of £30,000 to any one who should deliver up the fugitive Prince was offered by the government: a reward which it was supposed would surely tempt some individual of a race so needy as the Highland peasants to seek to enrich himself for ever by his discovery. But, as a century before, when Charles II. was in similar danger, scores of English rustics had proved superior to similar temptation, so now the Scotch mountaineers of every age and sex,

showed themselves equal in disinterested loyalty to the most faithful of the English royalists.

To escape from vigilant and untiring enemies, such as now sought his destruction, must in any event have been most difficult ; and, as if Fortune herself had conspired against him, it so fell out that the very place where his last battle was fought added greatly to his embarrassments. For Culloden was on the eastern coast of the kingdom, the side which could most easily be watched by the English cruisers ; and, though he had reason to believe that French vessels, whose crews were bound to his service, were hovering about the western islands, to reach them it was necessary to traverse the whole breadth of the island ; to make his way on foot through a country utterly unknown to him, and so rugged in its defiles, precipices and mountain torrents that even those most inured to them by early habit might well shrink from the toils of so long and hazardous a journey. Fortunately he was hardy, active, and in the prime of life ; of a strength of body as well as of a cheerfulness of disposition well calculated to battle with hardship and disregard privation. And after many weeks of

wandering, often without shelter for his head, often with but scanty and unpalatable food, he at last reached the western coast.

He was not yet in safety. The French vessels on which he reckoned were no longer there. He dared not remain on the mainland, but a boatman undertook to row him to the island of South Uist. The son of Clanronald, the chieftain of South Uist, had fought under his banner, and the father now received him with gladness. But as if fortune were never tired of persecuting him, the asylum which alone Clanronald could venture to give him, though it was but a lonely hut on an almost desert mountain, brought him into more imminent danger than ever. While he continued on the mainland the extent of the country was in some degree a protection to him; but he had not been long in South Uist before it became known that he had taken refuge in some one or other of the Hebrides, as that cluster of islands to which South Uist belongs is called.

A magnanimous enemy would have been willing, or indeed desirous, to connive at his escape; but we fear that the English government of the day thirsted for his blood; though to have

put to death one whose grandfather had been the lawful king of the land, and who had the claim of kindred on the reigning sovereign also, would surely have stamped the names of his executioners with indelible disgrace. Frigates were instantly sent to cruise round the coast; companies of soldiers were landed on every one of the islands, with strict orders to explore every village, every cottage, every wood, ravine or cavern that could afford a lurking-place.

Clanronald however was intrepid, and fertile in expedients. Under his guidance the royal fugitive constantly changed his dress and shifted his quarters; yet in spite of all his precautions it had more than once seemed as if nothing could save the Prince from falling into the hands of his pursuers; and he began to despair of being able much longer to elude their vigilance, sharpened as it was by the hope of the immense reward, when what the gallant and loyal chief, aided by his faithful clansmen, had almost ceased to hope for, was successfully achieved by Miss Flora Macdonald of Milton. Apparently she was but little qualified either by habit or by personal strength to encounter danger or hardship; for she was slight and delicate in

figure ; but she had a brave heart to appreciate gallant enterprise and deeds of courage ; and a full share of that tender sympathy and pity for danger and distress which is one of the most unfailing, as it also one of the most becoming, qualities of her sex.

Both feelings pleaded powerfully in her breast for the young Prince. He had undertaken a gallant and almost desperate enterprise in what he, at all events, was justified in believing to be the holiest of causes, the re-establishment of his father on a throne of which he had been born the heir, and of which he had been deprived through no fault of his own ; and he was now, after complete failure, in the most imminent danger, with fierce relentless enemies seeking for his life.

So mingled in those days were the sentiments with which, in Scotland especially, the established Government of King George and the claims of the exiled Stuarts were regarded, that there were few households in which the recent outbreak was regarded with unanimity of either favour or disfavour. The husbands, guided by reason and policy, commonly adhered to the reigning sovereign ; the women espoused the weaker side. And .

so, in the family of which we are speaking, Flora and her mother had watched the adventurous landing of the young Prince, the march to Derby, and still more the fatal retreat to Culloden, the disastrous rout, and his subsequent flight and wanderings, with daily increasing interest ; while her stepfather (for she had lost her father while still a child, and her mother had married a second husband of the same name, Macdonald of Arma-dale, as he was called from a small estate in Skye) was an officer of King George, and commander of one of the militia regiments of the Hebrides which was specially employed in the search for the royal fugitive.

Each week, if it may not be said each day, the search became keener ; the district within which the Prince's wanderings were circumscribed became narrower ; and it seemed almost hopeless to expect that he could long elude the pursuit of the numerous parties which were traversing the islands, and the straits which separate them, in every direction. At last, towards the end of June, he was driven to the little island of Benbecula, and with a single follower, an Irish officer named O'Neill, was hiding in a mountain hut belonging

to the Milton estate, when Miss Macdonald came to South Uist to visit her brother.

O'Neill had a slight acquaintance with her. He was aware of the sympathy which she had felt for the vicissitudes of the Prince's career; and he had also perceived in her traces of a chivalrous and romantic disposition, on which distresses such as those to which the Prince was now exposed could not fail to make a vivid impression. He remembered, too, the old proverb that when the chimney smokes it is sometimes best to be nearest to the fire, and conceived that, if he could but enlist her on his side, and induce her to aid in the concealment or escape of the Prince, her near connection with Armadale would prevent her movements from being regarded with suspicion; and that she therefore might be able to effect what to any one less apparently pledged to the side of the Government might be impossible.

He crossed over to South Uist, laid the whole case before her: the Prince's danger, his desolate condition, and the perplexity to which he himself was reduced, seeing neither how to remain where they were, nor in what

direction to flee. In her kindness, as he pleaded, lay the last hope of safety for the heir of that long line of kings who had reigned over Scotland ever since Bruce at Bannockburn established the freedom and independence of his country.

To ask Miss Macdonald to aid the Prince to baffle his foes was to ask her to risk her own life. For the punishment of death, with all the fearful accompaniments to which treason was liable by the English law, had been denounced by royal proclamation against all who should give the Prince shelter, or should even forbear to reveal his lurking-place.

But such a consideration did not weigh with her for a moment. The very extremity to which the Prince was reduced was in itself a sufficient motive for compliance with one whose heart was as tender as it was fearless. She undertook the task with cheerful enthusiasm; and without a moment's delay, for indeed the emergency admitted of none, she began to consider how it could best be accomplished. That very evening she passed over to Benbecula to have an interview with the Prince himself, and learnt that the plan which both to himself and O'Neill ap-

peared the most feasible was that he should return to Skye, since that island had been already explored by the royal soldiers in every direction; and since the manner in which they were now watching and searching the smaller islands proved that it was to them that their chief suspicions were now directed.

Skye, however, had dangers of its own. The chief landowner was Sir Alexander Macdonald of Sleat, who from the first had steadily discountenanced the Prince's undertaking; and, though it was generally believed that his conduct had been influenced by a confident expectation of his failure, at least as much by a preference for King George, it was probable that the same feeling would now prevent his committing himself by any effort to screen the Prince now that he had failed.

And though Flora's mother also lived in the island, and might be expected to approve, and, so far as she could, to aid her daughter's designs, yet the servants had been chosen by her husband, Armadale, and were therefore unsafe to trust with so important a secret. Still, where no plan that could be devised could be pro-

nounced safe, to seek refuge in Armadale itself seemed the measure attended with the least hazard; and to Armadale, therefore, Miss Macdonald undertook to conduct him as the first step; and to postpone till his arrival there the decision as to the next measure to be taken.

But even that night did not pass over without her personally experiencing how great and ubiquitous were the dangers with which she and her enterprise would be beset. Even the little boat in which, with a single boatman, she was returning to South Uist was not too insignificant to attract the notice of the searching parties. It was stopped; she was arrested, and brought before the commanding officer, who, however, proved to be Armadale himself.

She had need of all her presence of mind to account to one who, both as her stepfather and as an officer, was so well entitled to examine her as to her movements, and as to the causes of her being so late and so unattended on a journey. But the very circumstance of her having been so arrested supplied a plausible reason for her wishing to return to Skye; and, on her expressing such a desire, her stepfather gave her a pass for herself and her manservant, as well as for an Irishwoman

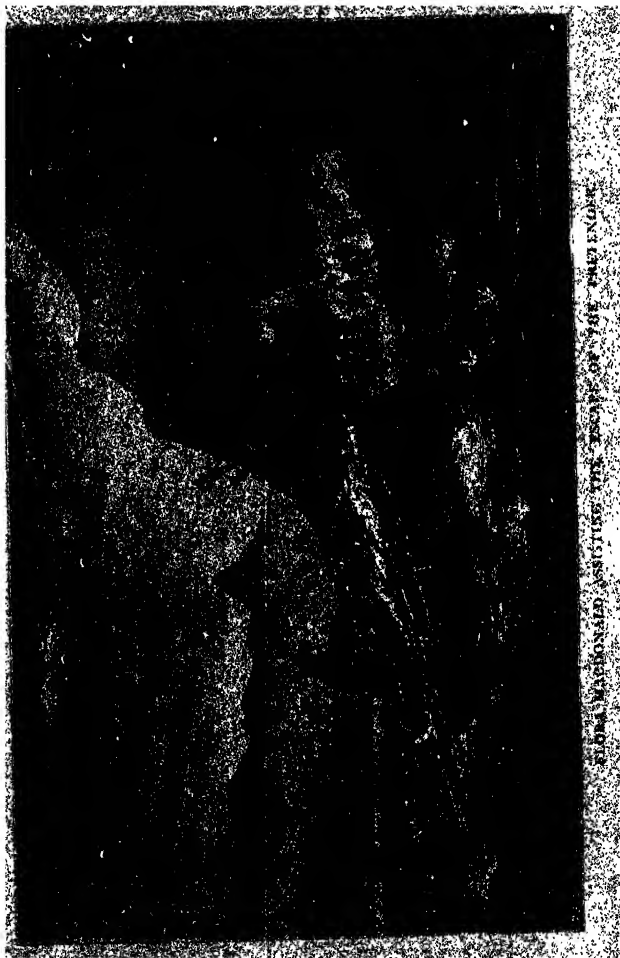
whose name was stated to be Betty Burke, and whom, as she explained, she had engaged for her mother's service as a spinner.

The Prince, who in the meantime had returned to his mountain-cabin till he should be summoned to rejoin her, was to be Betty Burke. As he was tall, even for a man, it was necessary that a gown and petticoats should be made on purpose for him. But the workwomen were diligent; at the end of two days all was ready, and Flora and her manservant, with O'Neill and the wife of Clanronald, repaired by night to the cabin to escort the Prince to the shore, where a boat was prepared, that they might put to sea under cover of such darkness as a midsummer night affords.

A British king had once been found baking oat-cakes; and now his descendant was roasting a fragment of sheep's liver, which was his only supper. The meal was eaten; the Prince was dressed in his new attire; and at midnight the party left the cabin for the boat, being, if they had been capable of fear, attended at almost every step by fresh warnings of danger. Presently Lady Clanronald was forced to return home, being summoned by a faithful servant, who had followed

her to report that a company of soldiers was in possession of her house. O'Neill, who quitted the Prince at the same time, had not proceeded more than a mile or two before he was arrested by another party, and compelled to give an account of himself; and, when at last Flora and her servants came in sight of the shore, where the boat which was waiting for them lay, so many soldiers were seen on the shingle and among the rocks, evidently on the look-out; and so many gigs and wherries laden with redcoats were cruising in the offing, that they were compelled to halt and crouch without food or shelter in the heather till night, when the exploring parties had returned to their quarters, and they could at last put to sea in apparent safety.

Fortunately the night was rainy and dark, and a fair wind allowed them to hoist a sail; but, when they came in sight of Skye, they found themselves in greater danger than ever. On the landing-place for which they were making was another party of troops, who were just trying to launch a boat. The boatmen turned and fled, but their flight naturally awakened suspicion. Had the soldiers' boat been in the water, nothing could have saved them. Luckily she was still on



FLORA WARDEN ASSISTING THE ESCAPE OF THE PRISONER

land, but the soldiers' muskets were loaded: they at once opened fire on the retreating vessel, and, while Flora and the Prince lay down at the bottom, and the rowers plied their oars with strength and skill which were never more needed, the bullets whistled over their heads, and threatened the whole party with instant destruction.

Luckily the soldiers, when they had launched their boat, did not pursue them. They coasted along; but from more than one creek or bay in which the travellers had purposed to land they were driven off by tokens of fresh danger. And it was night before they landed at a village called Kilmuir.

It was probably not exactly the place which they would have chosen, for it was close to Sir Alexander Macdonald's house. Fortunately he was on the mainland, in attendance on the Duke of Cumberland; and though his wife, the Lady Margaret, was at home, she was generally believed not to share her husband's sentiments, but to have earnestly desired the Prince's success, and undoubtedly to be relied on as eager to contribute to his safety. Whatever her sentiments might be, it was necessary to trust her; and as Miss Macdonald enjoyed her acquaintance, she decided

on going to the house, as if to pay her the civility of a visit as she was passing by on her way to her mother's home.

Leaving Betty Burke sitting on her trunk on the shore, she called at the house. It was as full of soldiers as Lady Clanronald's had been at South Uist; and, though they could hardly have had any suspicions of her in such company, the officer in command examined her as strictly on her movements, past, present, and future; inquiring where she had been, what had brought her to Kilmuir, and whither she was going, almost as if, as she afterwards described it, he supposed that she had the Prince in her pocket.

Her presence of mind rose with the danger. Her answers to every inquiry were so clear and natural that they utterly disarmed all the lieutenant's suspicions, if he had ever really entertained any. Careful to avoid every appearance of shunning his company, she even consented to stay to dinner, and thus presently found an opportunity of explaining the whole situation of herself and the Prince to Lady Margaret.

She had not miscalculated her feelings. Lady Margaret entered eagerly into the idea of con-

tributing to the Prince's safety, and called to their aid her husband's chief agent, Macdonald of Kingsburgh, who had never concealed his inclinations for the Jacobite cause, though deference for his employer had prevented him from joining the Prince's army. But no scruples of any kind could prevent him from using his best efforts to save his life, and it was at once settled that he should go down to the shore and conduct Betty Burke to his own house, which was a few miles off, and that Flora with her manservant should join them in the evening.

As the gentlemen were still at their wine, she returned to the dinner-table to keep the officer in conversation, and to prevent any chance of his taking the command of his company again and making any search in any quarter that evening. And this part of her design she also carried out with entire success, though it was in consequence late in the evening before she could set out to join her friends and resume the management of the affair.

For Kingsburgh, who had never seen the Prince before, was naturally less master of what was to be done. It was not equally natural that

he, being a man, should be attended by a woman-servant, nor did it occur to him to give the supposed Irishwoman directions or hints for her conduct. Consequently, before Miss Macdonald rejoined them Betty Burke's long strides had attracted the notice of more than one wayfarer whom they met; a perilous guess had even been hazarded by one traveller as he rode by that she might be a man in woman's clothes. Nor did it pass unnoticed that at one stream which they had to ford Betty raised her petticoats rather unbecomingly high, or that at the next, to avoid a recurrence of the laughter which her act had provoked from some rustics on the bank, she allowed them to draggle in the water without raising them at all.¹ However, at dusk Miss Macdonald overtook them, and before midnight the whole party reached Kingsburgh in safety.

Their dangers were not yet over; indeed, they might almost be said to be greater than ever. The sailors who had brought them to Skye, on their voyage back to South Uist, had fallen in with some of the troops who were searching those

¹ Scott has transferred both these incidents to the escape of Charles II. after Worcester. "Woodstock," vol. ii. c. 3.

islands, and had given but too faithful a description of the party which they had had on board. Even now Flora's presence of mind did not desert her. It was by her counsel that the Prince had been disguised as a woman: she now bade him resume the apparel of a man; and in one of the neighbouring woods he exchanged his petticoats for a suit of tartan, such as was worn by the peasants of the district. She reckoned that thus all trace of Betty Burke would be lost, and that, while the soldiers were hunting in vain for the striding Irishwoman, she should be able to conduct him without suspicion to the opposite coast.

Her aim was now to reach Portree, a village on the eastern side of the island, from which he would easily be able to regain the mainland, and thus would baffle the calculations and pursuit of his enemies by a step apparently the very last that could be expected, since it would place him again in their centre, and, as it were, almost within their grasp. It was twenty miles off, but, while Kinsburgh remained at home, she at once set off to walk thither, the Prince following at a respectful distance as an ordinary attendant.

The scheme succeeded: neither she nor her servant attracted attention; and the next afternoon they reached Portree in safety, where another Macdonald, who had fought in the Prince's ranks in every action from Preston to Culloden, had made arrangements for conveying him to Ramsay, an island between Skye and Ross-shire, from which it would be easy to cross to Ross at any time.

But Miss Macdonald went no further. It had now become as necessary for his safety that she should quit him as it had previously been that she should accompany him. The description of Betty Burke had excited the curiosity and suspicions of more than one of the King's officers. Indeed, a party of soldiers had reached Kingsburgh only a few hours after she had quitted it; and for her now to have gone to Ramsay would have been a certain means of attracting searchers to that island. But she had done her work. She had secured the Prince the passage from the Hebrides across Skye, a district so beset with his pursuers that it seemed equally impossible for him to remain in it or to escape from it. And, though he had still many

weeks of anxiety and hardship to encounter before he could find a safe conveyance to France, his real danger might be said to have terminated when he reached the shelter of Ramsay.

Indeed, it may be affirmed that from that day she was in the greater danger of the two. She had scarcely reached her mother's house when she was arrested and subjected to strict examination; from Skye she was transferred to Edinburgh, and from Edinburgh to London, where she was detained as a prisoner till the ensuing summer; but the general feeling in her favour was so strong, that the ministers found it would be in the last degree impolitic to take proceedings against her. And in July, 1747, an Act of Indemnity was passed which secured the safety of all the Jacobites who had not yet been brought to trial.

So simple and unaffected was her character, that she herself seemed unconscious of the true merit or importance of her exploit; but she was the only person who was so. Not only did the Prince himself acknowledge her as his deliverer, and send her his picture on his return to Paris, but his English rival, Frederick, Prince of Wales, expressed his admiration of her in the warmest

terms, hoping that his own nearest relatives would, in a similar emergency, have been capable of similar resolution.

And a tribute to her merit, of yet greater weight from the character of him who paid it, was given by perhaps the most remarkable traveller who ever visited the scene of her achievement. In one point of view it had met with the fitting reward of romance, as in her visit to Kingsburgh she had won the heart of the heir, and shortly after her return to Skye became his wife. And at Kingsburgh, a quarter of a century afterwards, she received Dr. Johnson, then making that tour in the Hebrides, his narrative of which is one of his most attractive works. So high was that celebrated writer's character for uncompromising honesty, and most unflattering frankness, that there was no man of his age whose praise was more valued ; and he has recorded as one of the most interesting incidents in his tour the circumstance of his having received the hospitality of a lady "whose name will be mentioned in history, and, if courage and fidelity be virtues, be mentioned with honour."

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MARIE ANTOINETTE.

(PART I.)

IN a previous sketch we have seen that the great Empress-Queen considered that she had for ever cemented the new alliance between Germany and France, on which she plumed herself as the greatest triumph of all her diplomacy, by giving her youngest daughter in marriage to the French Dauphin. She fondly flattered herself also that she had at the same time secured by the union the happiness of her favourite child, by thus making her the heiress of the most splendid throne in Europe, and giving her a husband who, so far as his character was yet known (for, like his bride, he was very young), was believed to be singularly inclined to the cultivation of the domestic virtues. But history has recorded few instances in which expectations apparently well-founded have been so lamentably deceived.

For some years, indeed, they seemed to be secure of realisation. As Dauphiness, the young Marie Antoinette not only at once won the heart of her husband, to whom, as is too often the case in royal marriages, she had previously been entirely unknown; but she also made a most favourable impression on, and excited a warm and affectionate interest in the breast of, his grandfather, the old King, who had not been so entirely hardened by a long life of profligacy and vice as to be insensible to the attractions of pure grace and high-minded virtue when presented to him under so attractive a form; while among all the frequenters of the palace, whether French courtiers or foreign visitors, she excited a unanimous feeling of admiration.

Her husband's accession to the throne, four years after their marriage, only rendered that admiration still more enthusiastic. Her grace and beauty, maturing and improving as she grew up to womanhood, were the theme of every tongue and of every pen; while the fame of her virtues, her purity, her gentleness, her universal affability and courtesy, her boundless and ever-active charity and humanity, reached to the most distant provinces, and awakened in thousands of those

who were too distant or too lowly in rank to witness her splendour lively feelings of love and gratitude.

She had also, in her own consciousness, the best of all rewards, the knowledge that she was doing good. Her example had purified a Court which licentiousness and infamy of every kind had for centuries made a byword in Europe. She had substituted for intrigue and scandal a respect for virtue, patriotism, and courage. And when, after a few years, she became a mother, and, followed by the heartfelt acclamations of the Parisians, and indeed of the entire nation, knelt before the altar of Nôtre Dame to return thanks to the Almighty for the birth of an heir to the throne, it might have been said and believed that she had no longer a wish ungratified; but that time itself could do nothing but add to a happiness whose foundations were so surely laid in the esteem and affection of the whole people.

Yet even amid all this apparent prosperity there was a worm in the bud secretly preparing its decay. Though she had compelled the Court to wear the appearance of propriety, the evils which generations of misrule had sown could not be so

speedily eradicated. Nay, the very attempt to extinguish them had created enemies who were interested in the continuance of abuses, and who therefore made it their chief business to impair her influence and disparage her character.

Nor were such base schemes confined to the ordinary Court parasites. Even from her husband's nearest kinsmen she did not receive the support for which she was entitled to look. The King had aunts, who ought to have been the best advisers to a young girl suddenly brought among strangers; he had brothers, who, as being of her own age, ought to have been not only her most acceptable companions, but her most trustworthy friends.

But her very charms and excellences were so far from conciliating their affection that they set them against her. They were aware that the King was singularly devoid of force of character and determination, and they had reckoned on maintaining over him the influence created by early associations, which should make them practically the rulers at least of the Court, if not of the kingdom. They were utterly disappointed when they found that the Queen's grace and attractions,



mental and personal, had given her an ascendancy over him which overbore theirs; and, under the influence of this unworthy jealousy, they all united against her, seeking to revenge themselves for their disappointment by all the acts of envy and detraction; by covert sneers at her habits whenever they differed, as they often did, from the old practices of the Court; and especially they took a malicious pleasure in pointing out that she was a foreigner, an Austrian, a native of a country which, having been the constant object of French hostility ever since the days of Henry IV., was still regarded with dislike by the great majority of the nation.

For many years, however, Marie Antoinette gave little heed to these ebullitions of spleen, but pursued the even tenor of her way, trusting to time and her own rectitude of intention gradually to overcome even the most prejudiced ill-will. And she had sufficient occupation to draw off her attention from unpleasant subjects. From the moment of their birth, her children were objects to her of the most unceasing and judicious care. She considered it the most important of all her duties to superintend their education in every

point, so as to qualify them to fill with propriety the high places which they must occupy in the eyes of the nation, and especially to give the future heir of the throne a fitting idea of the duties and responsibilities which would be imposed on him.

And her works of benevolence, as she performed them, took up no small portion of her time; for she did not limit her charity to giving large sums to be distributed by others, but visited in person the cottages of the aged or the sick in the neighbourhood of Versailles, which was the King's usual residence; and, when she had founded schools, hospitals, and asylums, she not only drew up the regulations for their management with her own hand, but paid them frequent visits of inspection at unexpected times, that she might be assured that the working of the different institutions corresponded with her intentions and directions.

If to do good is to be happy, she had abundant happiness during the first eighteen years of her married life. And she could also say, what no other Queen of France had been able to say for many centuries, that she was perfectly happy in

her husband. He had indeed defects to which she was not blind. He lacked firmness of character, and, what in a monarch is almost equally important, he lacked grace and dignity of manner; but he was sincere, honest, and as firmly attached to her as she was to him, and they set the whole nation an example of domestic virtue and union, such as at that time had rarely been seen in any Court, and for which the annals of the French monarchy might have been ransacked in vain. The citizens of Paris could hardly believe their eyes when they saw their King and Queen walk arm-in-arm along the Boulevards; and the courtiers received a salutary lesson, if they had been disposed to profit by it, when on each Sunday morning they saw the royal pair repair together to the parish church of Versailles for divine service.

But, though they were far from suspecting it, they were walking above a volcano whose smouldering fires were ready to break out. Marie Antoinette's beneficence could only alleviate or comfort distress in the narrow district around the palace and the capital; but in the country in general there was severe and constant misery.

Two long reigns of extravagant profligacy, and a series of wanton and costly wars, had exhausted the resources of the kingdom. More than one minister had proposed a formal confession of national insolvency; and, though that was withheld, it could not be denied that some of the measures which had been adopted had been tantamount to bankruptcy. Distress is invariably the parent of discontent. The only body in the whole kingdom which was exempt from the universal distress was a small portion of the nobility; and it was not the least felt of the existing grievances that the old feudal system had been but partially extinguished, and had left the nobles in possession of a variety of exemptions and privileges which were as inconsistent with the welfare of the State as they were with justice or common sense.

There arose a general cry for reform. Hitherto the government had been an uncontrolled despotism; but towards the end of the preceding reign a class of political writers had sprung up who had attacked the existing system of administration with great ability, and who, pointing to the English constitution, had denied that any people could be

said to be free which had not some voice in the government, and some power of making the King's ministers responsible for maladministration. The demand for reform, once raised, gradually became irresistible; and at last, after a long and vehement agitation, the ministers of the Crown, with the King's approval, assented to the revival of the States-General, as a body of representatives of the different classes of the nation, the Clergy, the Nobles, and the Commons, was called, which in the Middle Ages had been created with powers resembling those of the English Houses of Parliament, but which had long fallen into disuse.

Accordingly, the States-General were convened by royal authority, and met at Versailles in the first week of May 1789. But its very first proceedings made it evident that there was but slight probability of its deliberations leading to the result which those who originally advocated its convocation had desired. They for the most part had been honest patriots and judicious statesmen. If they had desired a diminution of the absolute power which the King had hitherto exercised, they wished for no more than Louis himself was willing to grant; and these views were shared by a large

number of the deputies who had been returned to the States-General.

But it was soon found that the Assembly contained also a large number who would not be content with any concessions which the King might voluntarily make. They desired to be seen to have extorted them, that the kingly dignity might be degraded by the humiliation of the sovereign. And there was a third party, inferior at first to either in numbers, but far superior in violence, and also in subtlety, which was not prepared to be content with any concessions whatever which did not sweep away Crown, Nobility, and Church, in short, all existing institutions, in one universal destruction, to establish on their ruins a republic of universal equality. There was also a fourth party, unhappily the weakest of all, whose principle of action was that of implicit obedience to the King, and which regarded him as having so exclusive a title to all power and authority that its members absolutely denied the power of the people, or of the States-General, to impose any limitations on its exercise.

With such a conflict of parties and such a divergence of views Louis was singularly unfit to

grapple. No ruler of any country was ever more penetrated with love for his people, but his very desire for their welfare misled him. He could not see that it might be kindness to refuse an extravagant or mischievous request. He could not perceive it to be his duty to visit tumult and crime with rigorous chastisement. He could not even be brought to take a single measure for his own safety, and that of those dearest to him, if there were a possibility of its leading to the shedding of a single drop of blood. But he adopted as his sole principle of action the rule of unqualified concession of every demand, and unconditional forgiveness of every offence.

Marie Antoinette was of a very different disposition. Fully coinciding in his doctrine that the proudest title of any sovereign was to be the protector and benefactor of his people, she had discernment to see that submission to all the caprices of the multitude was not the best way to study its real welfare. She thought, also, that a King had duties likewise to perform to himself and his posterity : duties which bound him to maintain his lawful prerogatives, and to preserve for his heirs at least such rights and privileges as were indis-

pensable to the maintenance of his just authority. Regarding him as the sole fountain of honour and power, she absolutely denied the right of the States-General or any other body to set bounds to his authority, or to impose on him and on the nation any Constitution of which every provision should not emanate from his own free will. Her views, in short, were those of the fourth, or Royalist party, as they were often called, in the States-General. And she regarded the Constitutionalists as foes to her husband's lawful dignity, equally odious as the Republicans themselves.

She made no concealment of her opinions; and, as the revolutionary demagogues, who from the first aspired to the lead in the Assembly, appreciated correctly the abilities and character of herself and Louis, and over-estimated the degree in which she was able to influence his policy (if indeed a policy he can be said to have had), they regarded her from the very first meeting of the States as the most formidable enemy of the Revolution, the antagonist whom it was most necessary for them, as it would also be most difficult, to overcome. As such they denounced her to the populace; and, though eventually the

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blow fell first on the King, it was her destruction that was first aimed at, and it was against her that plot after plot of assassination, and sometimes of open murder, was contrived. Nor was she for a single moment blind to her danger, though no peril to herself could induce her to swerve from the line of conduct which she had prescribed for herself.

The view which she had taken was not politically wise; but it was adopted from the highest and purest motives. She believed absolute authority, limited only by such bounds as he himself might choose to impose, to be the inalienable right of her husband and the inheritance of her son. She believed, moreover, that the welfare of the nation itself was deeply concerned in its maintenance, and therefore she had no doubt that to uphold that authority to its full extent was an object for which she was bound to struggle, even at the risk of life itself. If her view was not that of a statesman, it was that of a devoted, faithful, self-forgetting wife and mother, and it was carried out with the most unshaken resolution and fortitude.

It was not long before she was called on to

display these qualities. From the very first meeting of the States-General, the Revolution proceeded with great rapidity, and every successive resolution which the Assembly passed was an irremediable wound to the royal authority. The deputies even changed the name of States-General for that of the "National Assembly," as if to destroy the recollection that they owed their existence to the royal summons. They abrogated his right to prorogue or dissolve them; they swept away in a single sitting nearly all the rights of the Nobility and of the Church, and even the peculiar institutions of all the different provinces.

And, while the Assembly was proceeding in this headlong course, another set of demagogues in Paris were exciting the populace of the capital to a series of riots stained with the most inhuman atrocities. Under their guidance, the mob forced the Hôtel de Ville and plundered the municipal treasury; stormed the Bastille, the great prison-fortress of the city, and massacred the governor and garrison with circumstances of frightful barbarity. And, when they had thus inured the lower classes to deeds of blood, they announced the intention of leading them to attack the palace at Versailles.

giving notice some weeks beforehand of the very day which they had fixed for it, and hoping in the tumult to effect the murder of the Queen.

She had recently been smitten with an affliction which would have sufficed to move any heart, in which every feeling of humanity was not deadened, to commiseration and sympathy. Her eldest boy, the heir of the kingdom, who after the first few years of his life had begun to exhibit a sickly constitution, and as such had been for some time the peculiar object of her tenderest care, had died at the beginning of the summer, and she had been so prostrated by the blow, though latterly not unexpected, as to be for a time absolutely incapable of attention to any other matters.

But no regard for the dead or the bereaved could soften such hearts as those of her enemies. The pretext for the meditated riot was a scarcity of corn from which Paris had recently been suffering, and which had produced among all the poorer classes severe distress, which the King and Queen themselves had tried to alleviate by sacrificing their plate and even their jewels to purchase corn in the provinces. But the demagogues had persuaded the mob that the residence of the Court

at a distance from the city (though Versailles is but twelve miles from Paris) was the real cause of their sufferings. They nicknamed Louis and Marie Antoinette "the baker and his wife," and professed to design, as the object of the march of the populace to Versailles, the presentation of an address to Louis entreating him to make Paris his abode for the future.

The appointed day was the 5th of October, and the sun had not yet risen on that morning when a vast mob, composed of the lowest of both sexes, collected in the great market-place of the city; seized the armoury at the Hôtel de Ville; and, having equipped themselves with weapons of all kinds, took the road to Versailles, raising vociferous cries for food, though in fact a large portion of them were drunk; and mingling with them ferocious threats against the Queen and all the aristocrats, as they had been taught to call every one of gentle birth or in easy circumstances.

So little credit had been given to the notice of the intended outbreak (or it might perhaps be more correct to say, so little was it believed that, if such a riot had been meditated, such notice

would have been given at all) that both the King and the Queen were absent from the palace, Louis having gone to hunt, and Marie Antoinette having repaired to the neighbouring palace of the Little Trianon, where she had her favourite garden, when a faithful friend brought word to the palace of the approach of the rioters.

They both returned with all speed; but Marie Antoinette, whose courage, ever high, rose with the approach of danger, found herself utterly unable to induce Louis to act with vigour, and either to call out the troops, of whom there was a sufficient garrison at hand, or else to quit the palace and retire to Rambouillet. He could resolve on nothing for himself. He begged her to withdraw to Rambouillet with their remaining children; but she refused to leave him, declaring that her place was by his side, and that, as the daughter of Maria Teresa, she did not fear death.

So vast was the crowd that it was late in the afternoon before it reached Versailles. It surrounded the palace, shouting out ferocious threats against all its inmates, but especially against the Queen; firing muskets at the walls; and trying, but happily trying in vain, to beat down the iron

railings or gates of the courtyard. Some even of the garrison fraternised (to use a new word which was coming into vogue with the champions of the new order of things) with the rioters. But the Body-guard, a noble corps composed wholly of gentlemen, were firm in their loyalty, and, undismayed by numbers, withstood them with gallantry and success, though some of their body sealed their devotion to their sovereign with their blood. And before midnight tranquillity seemed to be restored, and the King and Queen, exhausted with the fatigues of the long and anxious day, retired to rest.

But the worst was to come. The Duke of Orleans, the first prince of the blood, had been one of the chief promoters of the riot. Like too many of his branch of the royal house, he had long been notorious for the most unrestrained profligacy, to which he added an abject cowardice which had not previously been among its failings. But he was ambitious, and acquainted with English history; and, remembering that a century before a revolution in that country had led to the dethronement of the reigning sovereign and the substitution of another member of the royal

family in his place, he had conceived the hope that he, in a similar manner, might profit by the overthrow of his cousin Louis; while he hated Marie Antoinette with a personal enmity, because, as was generally believed, he had once presumed to insult her with the language of gallantry, and had been repulsed and reproved by her with indignant and well-merited disdain.

He had hoped that the time had now arrived for the realisation of both his projects of ambition and revenge. Throughout the previous day and during the greater part of the night he and his agents had been mingling with the rioters and supplying them with money and liquor. And he must have found some means of tampering with the sentinels on duty, since at dawn one of the gates of the inner court of the palace, which the day before had resisted the most violent assaults of the mob, was discovered to be open. The rioters poured in, Orleans himself pointing out to them the way which led to the royal apartments, and raised shouts of ferocious triumph, as if their destined victims were already in their grasp.

But fortunately a small detachment of the

Body-guard had its quarters in a saloon just outside the Queen's bed-chamber, and the sentinels now on duty were worthy of the best days of the French army. Though they were but five men, they did not fear to encounter the whole body of assailants, and, aided by the narrowness of the staircase and their own superiority of skill in the use of their weapons, they kept them at bay long enough to give time for her ladies to rouse the Queen and conduct her to one of the rooms overlooking the main court of the palace, in which, in a short time, the King and all the other occupants of the palace, with some of the ministers, were collected.

Those of the rioters who had at last succeeded in forcing their way into the Queen's bedroom were sufficiently occupied with pillaging the treasures which it contained; but those in the courtyard, furious at having been balked in their purpose of massacre, kept firing at the walls and windows of the palace, and shouting out menacing demands for the Queen to show herself. It was evident that she was the chief object of their animosity, but of all the party in the palace she was the most tranquil and unruffled. When the first shots were

heard, one of the ministers, M. de Luzerne, had quietly stepped between her and the window to screen her from danger; but, while she thanked him for his devotion, she begged him to retire, saying, with her habitually gracious courtesy, that it was her place to be there, and that the King could not afford to have so faithful a servant endangered.

And, as the shouts for her appearance grew more vehement, after a few minutes, leading her little son and daughter by the hand, she stepped out on to the balcony to confront those who were thirsting for her blood. The mob raised a fresh cry, "No children." She led the Dauphin and his sister back into the room, and returning to the balcony, stood before them alone, unattended, with her hands crossed and her eyes looking up to heaven, as one who expected instant death, with a firmness as far removed from defiance as from supplication.

Even those ruthless miscreants were awed by her magnanimous fearlessness: not another shot was fired. For a moment it seemed as if her enemies had become her partisans. Shouts of "Long live the Queen" were heard on all sides, and one ruffian.

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who did raise his gun to take aim at her had it beaten down by those who stood near him, and ran some danger of being himself sacrificed to their indignation. But this feeling was but a momentary impulse of respect, and presently fresh clamours, as vehement as that of the previous day, began to renew the demand for the removal of the King and Queen to Paris.

It was a cry which it had now become dangerous, perhaps impossible, to resist, even had not Louis from the first prescribed for himself the rule of assenting to every demand which might be made upon him, unless it should be of a character incompatible with his duty to religion. Accordingly, he himself went out to the balcony, accompanied by the Queen, and promised to accede to the request; and the same afternoon the whole family left the palace, which they were destined never to behold again, and drove slowly to Paris, escorted by the whole body of rioters, who now regarded themselves as their conquerors, and who, all their shortlived decency of feeling and respect having passed away, seemed resolved to make amends for it by sparing them no one particular of humiliation. They surrounded the royal carriage, singing

foul and menacing songs in the royal ears, while some who were within reach even stabbed at it occasionally with their pikes, and those at a greater distance fired shots at it, which, however, fortunately missed their aim and did no injury.

The Tuileries, where the King and Queen now took up their residence, had been almost disused since the completion of Versailles. Much of the furniture had been removed; what remained was tarnished and faded, and the whole appearance of the rooms was so shabby as to attract the remarks even of the children. But it was not the poorness or discomfort of the apartments which struck Marie Antoinette with horror and despair, but the shameful circumstances under which they had come to Paris, and her perception that even the melancholy and humiliating scenes through which they had passed had failed to inspire Louis with resolution, or to induce him to depart from his fatal policy of concession to every demand of those whom by this time he must see to be bent upon his ruin.

She saw too clearly that all before them was dark. The comment which she had made on quitting Versailles was that "they were undone;

they were being dragged away, perhaps to death, which was never far removed from captive sovereigns." And from this time forward such was her prevailing feeling. There were moments when, prompted by her innate courage and sanguineness of disposition, she cherished a shortlived hope, founded on a consciousness of the King's and her own purity of intention and undiminished zeal for the happiness of the people, or on a belief, which she never wholly discarded, in the natural goodness of the citizens when not led astray by demagogues; but her general feeling was one of humiliation for the past and despair for the future.

Not only did the example of Charles I. of England, whose fate was ever before her eyes, fill her with dread for her husband's life (to her own danger she never gave a thought), but she felt also that the cause and principle of royalty had been degraded; and we shall fail to do justice to the patience and fortitude of her conduct during the remainder of her life if we allow ourselves to forget that they were excited in spite of the most disheartening convictions; that she was struggling because it was her duty to struggle for her husband's honour and her child's inheritance; but that she was

never long sustained by that incentive which, with so many, is absolutely indispensable to steady and useful exertion, the anticipation of success.

• It was plain, at all events, that if they were to be saved, it must be by herself, and not by the King, that their deliverance must be achieved. And she never threw away an opportunity of encouraging her friends or conciliating her enemies. Whatever might be the circumstances or the people that surrounded her, her presence of mind and winning tact of manner never failed. The very day after she reached the Tuileries a mob of the lowest class collected on the terrace under her windows, apparently for the mere purpose of upbraiding and threatening her. She replied to them with as much calmness and cheerfulness as if they had been welcome and trusted friends. With explanations and expostulations she mingled assurances of the sincere love which she herself and the King felt for the whole nation; and her sincerity was so evident that at last she vanquished even the noisiest of her visitors. The women begged the ribbons and flowers of her bonnet, divided them with thankful exultation, and departed with cheers for their "good Queen."

But still the Revolution went on rapidly. Every fresh vote passed by the Assembly was a fresh encroachment on the royal authority, while still more ominous indications of the growing ferocity of the enemies of the Crown were afforded by continual riots, every one of which was marked by deeds of bloodshed and horror such as could only be paralleled among the most barbarous savages. Often the rioters, not contented with mere murder, tore their victims to pieces, to bear their still quivering limbs in triumph through the streets, or even with cannibal fierceness to feast on the bleeding fragments.

And, if the violence of the enemies of the King and Queen was becoming more formidable, the pusillanimity of their friends was fraught with still greater danger to them. In the great English rebellion, to which, as has been mentioned, she constantly compared the state of affairs in France, the King had at least never to complain that he was deserted by his friends. The Royalist nobles and gentry in Parliament and in the field stood by him, fought for him, and died for him, to the last. But in France the first thought of the great bulk of those who pro-

fessed attachment to the King was not their duty to him, but their own safety.

Louis's own brothers, they who above all other men were bound to stand by him with bravery and constancy, were on the contrary the very first to flee from the country. And before the close of the year the disgraceful example which they set was followed by thousands of others; the greater part of the Royalist deputies in the Assembly even resigning their seats, and thus leaving the kingly authority at the mercy of its assailants. Nor was the injury which they thus did to their royal master confined to this withdrawal of actual support. When they had found an asylum in a foreign country, they disregarded his wishes, often openly disobeyed his positive orders, and by the perverseness and indiscretion with which they carried on the most senseless intrigues, often furnished the demagogues in Paris with plausible grounds for representing the whole party, including the King himself, as irreconcilably hostile to the constitution and the liberties of the people.

As the months passed by, even the personal liberty of the sovereign began to be circumscribed. One of the first measures of the Revo-

lutionary party in the Assembly had been to organise a new force in Paris under the name of the National Guard, which had been placed under the command of the Marquis de la Fayette, a nobleman who had connected himself with them, and who, though utterly destitute of ability of any kind, had the power, as he had the will, to be mischievous. It was to detachments of this body that the duty of guarding the palace was now committed; and, acting under La Fayette's orders, they discharged it in so offensive a manner, following the Queen and even the children in all their movements with so untiring a scrutiny, that Marie Antoinette complained that she was watched like one of the vilest criminals.

And, if this body of city soldiers was professedly hostile, the summer brought the fact to light that even the regular army could not be wholly depended on: and more than one mutiny broke out, which, though repressed for the time by the vigilance and energy of its officers, gave a sad warning how little confidence could be placed in any attempt which it might be necessary to make to repel force by force. The revolutionary madness was contagious, and was rapidly infecting all ranks.

But still Marie Antoinette's courage remained unshaken. "Her misfortunes," as she wrote to one of her friends, "should never diminish her resolution; they would only give her more prudence." And she continued ever watchful to take advantage of any favourable opportunity which might present itself to "bring back the people to proper ideas sufficiently to make them enjoy a reasonable and honest freedom such as the King and she herself had always desired for them."

So great at times was the impression which her firmness seemed to make, that some of her enemies saw no prospect of the success of their designs while she lived, and employed assassins to take her life, one of whom was actually seized in the inner garden of the palace by the royal servants, but, though he confessed his design, was protected from punishment by the influence of his employers.

So notorious at last did these machinations against her life become, that her brother, the Emperor Leopold, urged her to quit the country, and the advice was even seconded by some of the ministers, who believed that the knowledge that

she was beyond their reach might make the Revolutionists less hostile to the King.

But such was not her idea of her duty as either wife or Queen. As she replied to Leopold, "He must remember that she did not belong to herself. Her duty was to remain where Providence had placed her, and to oppose her body, if the necessity should arise, to the knives of the assassins who would fain reach the King. She should be unworthy to be her mother's daughter if danger could make her desert the King and her children." Certainly, if no one ever faced danger with greater magnanimity, no one was ever actuated by a loftier sense of honour and duty.

Another year passed by; but the beginning of 1791 was characterised by greater audacity than ever on the part of the Revolutionists, and by more open inroads than ever on the dignity and even safety of the sovereign.

One day a body of rioters collected to attack the castle of Vincennes, and though that attempt was quelled without difficulty, La Fayette made it a pretext for offering new insults to Louis and his adherents. On another occasion, when the King and Queen were preparing to drive to their

suburban palace of St. Cloud, a mob unharnessed the carriage and compelled them to return to their apartments. And before the end of the same week the Assembly passed a vote which seemed as if it were meant for a formal sanction of this outrage, prohibiting, as it did, the King from ever moving more than twenty leagues from Paris.

Such an ordinance was a deprivation of freedom which was never before inflicted in any country, except upon convicted criminals. It was an injury and insult, too, to all the distant provinces and cities of the kingdom, which were entitled to look forward to occasional royal visits as not only an honour but a benefit. And it decided Louis to take a step which several of his adherents whose character for sagacity and judgment was most established had often recommended, and of which Marie Antoinette also had long been desirous: that of quitting Paris and placing himself under the protection of the army in Lorraine, which was at that time commanded by the Marquis de Bouillé, the most distinguished officer in the whole service.

The attempt was made, and failed. We need

not here enter into the details, nor describe minutely how, after all the arrangements had been made by the Queen herself, and had been carried out by her with consummate judgment and presence of mind, and after the royal family had travelled a hundred miles in safety, the enterprise was baffled at the last moment by a series of unfortunate accidents.

It is sufficient to say here that when they had almost reached the end of their journey they were recognised; that the mayor of an insignificant village took upon himself to arrest their progress, and that they were brought back by force to Paris, which they re-entered amid a mob of desperate ruffians, who awaited their return at the city gates, and followed them to the palace with vociferous insults and threats of instant death.

More than once in the course of the last few months Marie Antoinette had expressed to her brother her conviction that the very lives of Louis and herself were "no longer safe; that the sword was ever suspended over their heads." And the defeat of this attempt to escape so emboldened their enemies that they no longer disguised their resolution to effect their destruction.

From the beginning of the Revolution one or two clubs had been formed for the purpose of promoting the political views of some of the different political parties, and one, called the Jacobins, from the circumstance of its sittings being held in an old convent of Dominican or Jacobin friars, had long taken the lead in the advocacy of the most violent measures. Its most influential members were Robespierre, one of the deputies of the Commons for Arras, a man endowed with fluent and plausible eloquence; Danton, whom his friends extolled as one especially gifted with acute views of statesmanship; and Marat, the editor of a newspaper, whose blood-thirsty counsels were rendered still more disgusting by the gross indecency of language in which they were urged.

These men no longer thought it necessary to affect the least concealment of their objects. One day they made a formal motion for the dethronement of Louis; on another they demanded that he and Marie Antoinette should both be brought to trial, not disguising their intention to ensure their conviction and condemnation. And though the Assembly was not yet

ripe for such an atrocity, inasmuch as the Royalists and the Constitutionals who remained could still muster in numbers sufficient to procure a vote that the King's recent departure from Paris furnished no ground for legal proceedings, both King and Queen saw that their fate was but deferred.

Meanwhile, every political change, and there were many changes, made their condition worse. From time to time ministers resigned or were driven from office, and Louis was unable to replace them by men in whom he had confidence, but was compelled to submit to the dictation of some section of the Assembly whose object was to weaken his position and diminish his means of resisting further encroachments. It had been settled, also, that in the autumn of 1791 the existing Assembly should be dissolved, and that its members should be incapable of re-election, a regulation which excluded not only all the old Royalist party, but also those Constitutionals who, though Marie Antoinette herself always regarded them with distrust, as being imbued with an opinion that the nation had a right to impose limitations on the authority of the

sovereign, were nevertheless firmly attached to the principle of monarchy. And it is not too much to say that with the dissolution of the old Assembly all hope of safety for the monarchy, if not for the very life of the King, was extinguished. ✓

MARIE ANTOINETTE.

PART II.

FOR the new Assembly was almost wholly hostile to him, and with it a new club also started into existence, from whom he had not less to fear than from the most furious of the Jacobins. It was known as the Girondins, from the circumstance of some of its most influential members coming from the department of the Gironde, a name which had been given to a portion of the old province of Gascony. The leaders were all avowed Republicans, and, with but one or two exceptions, avowed infidels; they were as unscrupulous advocates of tumult and bloodshed as the Jacobins themselves; and, though in some points they fell short of them in political resolution, they brought to the revolutionary councils a degree of plausible cunning and a skill in organisation which rendered them even more dangerous.

• It was in more than one point of view cha-

characteristic of the party that the person who of all others had the greatest weight in its councils was a woman of the name of Roland, the wife of one of the Norman deputies, and of so sanguinary a temper that as early as the summer of 1789 she had recommended the assassination of the King and Queen while they were still in fancied security at Versailles, and that in the course of the next year she plotted the assassination of one who was by far the ablest of her husband's colleagues, because he was not prepared to acquiesce in the measures of extreme violence which alone found favour in her eyes.

Under her guidance, then, the Girondins, from the first opening of the second Assembly, actively devoted themselves to paving the way for the destruction of the monarchy and of the monarch. In the spring of 1792 Louis had been compelled to declare war against Austria and Prussia; and Jacobins and Girondins now united in pointing out that Marie Antoinette belonged to one of the hostile nations, and was eager for the triumph of her countrymen, and in publishing pamphlets against her, and making songs on her which implied that she hoped to bring enemies against Paris, who would massacre the citizens. Before mid-

summer they succeeded in driving the ministers from office, and compelling the unhappy Louis to select their successors from their own ranks. And when they had thus removed all the remaining bulwarks from the throne, they proceeded to organise an insurrection, which they had little doubt they should be able so to direct as to sweep away both the throne and its occupants in one general destruction.

The royal family, and especially the Queen, was well aware of what was in contemplation; and indeed the plotters took no pains to keep their designs secret. Yet so indomitable was Marie Antoinette's courage, so thoroughly were all her actions and thoughts guided by the one principle of doing her duty to her husband, her child, and even to the people, whom, amid all the injuries and insults which she was enduring at its hands, she never ceased to speak of as in heart well-disposed, if they were not too easily led away, that the knowledge of their impending danger failed to dishearten or enfeeble her: it rather strengthened her to resist and endure.

Her bodily strength did indeed begin to fail. The loss of daily exercise, to which she had been habituated from her youth, but which she could no

longer venture to take, lest she should expose herself to the coarse insults which the basest of hirelings were ever on the watch to offer her, was telling on her health. Sleep had deserted her; all her light-hearted cheerfulness, all her gaiety of demeanour, were gone. On one occasion, when the little Dauphin met in one of his story books with the expression "as happy as a queen," his comment on it was that he knew one queen who was not happy, since his mamma wept from morning till night. And this was but too true a picture of the state to which she was reduced. Yet still she could speak words of comfort and encouragement to Louis, and try to rouse him to meet the intended attack with the spirit becoming the heir of a long line of kings. It was nobler, as it seemed to her, to fight for a crown than to allow himself unresistingly to be stripped of it; to die, if it were to be so, with arms in his hands, rather than to be tamely massacred without an attempt to defend himself.

Alas! to inspire Louis with active resolution was impossible, even for her energy and affection. With passive courage to endure, with fortitude and resignation, he was abundantly endowed. Nor, in many points of view, was he deficient in soundness

of judgment. But he could never be brought to understand that the safety of the whole nation was bound up with his own : that one of the chief duties of a king was, if possible, to prevent, but if that proved impossible, to chastise, crime ; and that in protecting himself, even by force, at the cost of bloodshed, he would also be protecting order and justice, and the safety and welfare of the virtuous and loyal part of his subjects against the lawlessness and violence of the worst.

The day fixed for the meditated insurrection was well known : it was the 20th of June. And on the previous evening Louis made preparations, not for resistance, but for defeat, and probably for death. He summoned his confessor. " He had never," he told him, " had such need of his consolations. He had done with this world, and his thoughts were now fixed on heaven alone. Great calamities were announced for the morrow ; but he felt that he had courage to meet them." And after the holy man had left him, as he gazed on the setting sun, he once more gave utterance to the same forebodings. " Who can tell," said he, " whether it be not the last sunset that I shall ever see ? "

The organisers of the conspiracy had pretended

to disguise their designs under a peaceful pretext. The people, it was given out, were about to proceed to the palace to present a petition to the King to recall some of the Girondin ministers whom he had recently dismissed, and to give his royal assent to a decree which the Assembly had recently passed against the priests, but which he had rejected as being incompatible with his religious obligations.

But in every circumstance of the conduct of the procession every pretence of peace or submissive request was studiously disregarded. Because Louis had refused his assent to the decree, the mob had nicknamed him Mr. Veto. And now the procession was headed by a troop of standard-bearers carrying banners with such inscriptions as "Death to Veto and his wife." "Beware the Lamp,"¹ or "Tremble tyrants." One gang of ruffians carried a model of a guillotine, another bore aloft a miniature gallows, with an effigy of the Queen herself hanging from it.

Even without such emblems of menace the pro-

¹ In allusion to the chains from which the street lanterns were suspended, and which of late had frequently been used by the mob as gibbets for their victims.

cession was sufficiently formidable, consisting as it did of at least twenty thousand men, the greater part of whom were armed with weapons of one kind or other, muskets, pikes, hatchets, and even spits from the cooks' shops forming part of their equipment. And it was led by a brewer named Santerre, who from the day of the attack on the Bastille three years before had been the chief agent in every outrage.

It gathered recruits at every step, and the multitude became so vast that evening was approaching before it drew up in front of the Tuileries. Even had Louis had the will, there were but scanty means of resisting them. A few companies of the National Guard formed the whole protection of the palace, and agents of D'Orleans and the Girondins had been busily tampering with them the whole morning; they had been but too successful; many had been seduced; though still a few remained firm in their loyalty; but the best defence of the sovereign was a small band of gentlemen who had repaired to the palace in the morning to furnish to their King such protection as could be found in their loyal and devoted gallantry. The old Marshal de Noailles

had led armies under Louis's grandfather; the Count d'Hervilly had commanded the cavalry of the Constitutional Guard; M. d'Acloque was a captain of high reputation; and these officers therefore brought military experience to aid their valour, and made such arrangements as the shortness of time and the character of the building permitted to keep the rioters at bay. Still, it seemed impossible for any degree of skill and valour to present effectual resistance to such overwhelming numbers; and treachery weakened even their apparent resources.

Finding the gates closed, the mob began to batter them with sledge-hammers; and, as they still stood firm, some of the municipal magistrates came forward and commanded the sentries to open them to the sovereign people. The gates were opened. The mob seized one of the cannon which stood in the courtyard, carried it up the stairs of the palace, and planted it against the door of the royal apartments; and, while they shouted out a demand for Louis to show himself, began to batter it as they had before battered the gates, and threatened, if it did not yield to their hatchets, to blow it down with cannon-shot.

To fear of personal danger Louis was as insensible as his bravest soldier. The hatchets beat down the outer door, and, as it fell, he came forth from the room behind, and with unruffled countenance accosted the ruffians who were pouring through it. He was accompanied by his sister Elizabeth, a princess of the most exquisite amiability, but, when occasion required, showing the high spirit that became her blood by the most intrepid courage and equanimity. But the Queen was not with him: Louis had entreated her to keep back, and she, knowing how special an object of the popular hatred and fury she was, with a fortitude beyond that which defies death, remained out of sight, lest she should add to his danger.

The whole palace was filled with armed men, but the main body of the rioters were unable to penetrate beyond the gardens or the courtyard, where they comforted themselves by shouts of triumph, and demands that the heads of the King and Queen should be thrown out to them.

It was perhaps in scenes such as this that Louis appeared to the greatest advantage. All the uproar and threats and fury of his assailants could not disturb for a moment his magnanimous calmness.

When the few soldiers who still remained faithful to him seemed as if they were preparing to attack the rioters and drive them down the stairs sword in hand, he bade them put up their weapons, for the crowd was excited rather than wicked. And he reproved, with as composed a dignity as if he had been seated on his throne at Versailles, a ruffian who, as the spokesman of his comrades, threatened him with instant death if he did not at once comply with their petition. The present, he replied, was not the time for making such a demand, nor was this the way in which to make it.

But still the uproar increased, and above it rose loud cries for the Queen, till at last she also came forward. It was but out of consideration for her husband's safety that she had hitherto kept back in an inner room. Her feeling was, now as ever, that her duty was to be at the King's side: if need be, to die with him: but that to stand aloof was infamy. And now, as the demands of her appearance grew louder, even those who had hitherto desired to restrain her confessed that it might be safer for her to show herself. The door of her room was thrown open, and leading her children by the hand, and

attended by her ladies, the most timid of whom seemed inspired by her example, Marie Antoinette advanced, took her place by the side of her husband, and with head erect and colour heightened by the sight of her enemies, faced them disdainfully.

As lions in their utmost fury have recoiled before a man who has looked them steadily in the face, so did even those miscreants quail before their pure and single-minded Queen. At first it seemed as if her bitterest enemies were to be found among those of her own sex. The men for a moment were silenced, but a young girl, whose appearance was not that of the lowest class, came forward and abused her in coarse and bitter language, especially reviling her as "The Austrian."

Marie Antoinette, astonished at finding such violence in one apparently tender and gentle, condescended to expostulate with her. "Why do you hate me? I have never injured you." "You have not injured me, but it is you who cause the misery of the nation." "Poor child," replied the Queen, "they have deceived you. I am the wife of your King; the mother of

your Dauphin, who will be your King. I am a Frenchwoman in every feeling of my heart. I shall never again see Austria. I can only be happy or unhappy in France, and I was happy when you loved me." The girl was melted by her patience and mild dignity of condescension. She burst into tears, and asked pardon for her conduct. "I did not know you," said she; "I see now that you are good." Another asked her, "How old is your girl?" "She is old enough to feel acutely such scenes as these."

But meantime the crowd kept pressing forward. One of her officers had drawn a table in front of her as she advanced, so as to screen her from actual contact with the rioters, but more than one of them stretched forward across it as if to reach her. Santerre himself leant on it with his hands, and, while it shook with his vehemence, accosted her with what he meant for courtesy. "Princess," he said, "do not fear. The French people do not wish to slay you. I promise this in their name."

Marie Antoinette had long ago declared that her heart had become French. It was too truly so for her to permit such a ruffian's claim to be

regarded as the spokesman of the nation. "It is not by such as you," she replied with lofty scorn, "that I judge of the French people, but by brave men like these." And she pointed to the gentlemen, her voluntary champions, who were standing around her, and to the faithful grenadiers. The well-timed and well-deserved compliment roused them to more ardent enthusiasm than ever, but already the danger was passing away.

During the earlier part of the tumult the Assembly had been proceeding with its ordinary business, as if nothing that was taking place at the palace called for its interference. But Count Dumas, one of the very few men of noble birth who had been returned to the second Assembly, with one or two other deputies who still preserved their loyalty, had made their way to the Tuileries to see what was taking place, and, quickly returning, had made a formal report of the imminent danger in which the King and Queen were placed. Luckily, on this day the favourers of the insurrection were not in the ascendant, and Dumas now made such a representation of the state of the royal family, and insisted so earnestly and firmly

on the duty of the Assembly to interfere for the protection, that a deputation of members was sent to the palace to take measures for their safety.

The mayor, too, a Jacobin of the name of Pétion, who pretended to have hitherto been ignorant of what was taking place, was, in like manner at last shamed into exerting his authority though his language was unworthy of his office, and as insulting to the King as the actions of Santerre himself. In the name of the municipal magistrates he thanked the mob for the moderation and dignity with which they had exercised the right of petition, and bade them finish the day in similar conformity to the law, and return to their homes. They obeyed. The interposition of the Assembly had convinced their leaders that they could not succeed in their purpose now. Santerre himself, whose softer mood, such as it was, had soon passed away, muttered with a deep oath that they had missed their blow, but must try it again hereafter; and for the present he drew off his brigands.

For the moment tranquillity was restored. But no one could doubt that Santerre's threat would be executed, and that the recent outrage,

though baffled, would prove but the forerunner of similar attacks, of which it was hardly probable that all would have so comparatively harmless a termination. In fact, it soon became known that the authors of the late tumult were preparing for another attempt, the day fixed for which was even announced. And those Royalists who still remained in Paris entreated Marie Antoinette to renew the attempt to leave Paris.

The people of Normandy were still almost unanimously well-disposed and loyal; and in that province one of Louis's former ministers, who was still one of his most trusted counsellors, M. Bertrand de Moleville, had found a fortress, the Château Guillon, which was strong enough to resist any attack, and to which M. d'Hervilly undertook to conduct the whole family in safety.

The decision rested with Marie Antoinette, for Louis had become more than ever incapable of forming a resolution; but though she deliberated long and carefully on the proposal, she eventually rejected it, and determined to abide the coming attack in Paris. And, though the wisdom of her decision has been often impugned, it was in strict conformity with her previous

conduct and her constant principle of action. Throughout the whole of the long conflict, which had now lasted three years, her language had constantly been that honour was dearer than life; and honour she identified with the preservation of her husband's crown and her child's inheritance. For them duty, in her view of it, called on her to struggle to the end. And, as in the preceding year their departure from the capital had been used by the Jacobins as a plea for proposing the King's dethronement, she could not doubt that a similar journey would be made the pretext for a repetition of the proposal. She even suspected that the openness with which the intention to renew the attack was announced was intended to terrify the King into a flight, which would leave the whole field, both in the Assembly and in the city, open to his enemies. To stay and face the coming danger might indeed cost Louis and herself both throne and life, but it might also save both; and she thought it her duty rather to risk both than to save the one at the expense of the other. And when the path of duty was clear, no other consideration was ever placed by her in competition with it.

The day fixed for the second insurrection was the 10th of August, and both parties spent the preceding week in anxious preparation. So audacious and open in their treason were the Girondin leaders, that they had the insolence to address a letter to Louis, in which they threatened that, unless he at once conceded all the demands which had been made in the petition of the 20th of June, a new insurrection should sweep away palace and throne. And one of Madame Roland's chosen friends brought up from Marseilles, and some other cities of the South, a gang of five hundred miscreants, the refuse of the galleys and the gaols, who were capable of any atrocity. On the other hand, the Royalists who still remained in Paris mustered gallantly round their King.

On Sunday the 5th, the very last Sunday which he was ever to behold as the acknowledged sovereign of the land, Louis held a *levée*. And it was attended by a more than usually numerous and brilliant company, though the gaiety appropriate to such a scene was on this occasion clouded over by the anxiety for their royal master and mistress which sobered every one's demeanour and spread a gloom over every countenance. A large

part of the National Guard also, by their promptitude and energy in repressing the slightest appearance of disorder, testified their loyalty and steadiness. And on the afternoon of the 9th a chivalrous body of above one hundred gentlemen, headed by the Marshal de Mailly, a veteran of proved courage and of the highest reputation, came to the palace to fight, or, if need should be, to die for their King and Queen, though they had no weapons but their swords.

As the evening wore on they began to muster their forces. Fortunately, the commander of the National Guard on duty was M. Mandat, an officer of the highest professional skill, intrepid courage, and unyielding zeal for the royal cause, and his brigade of two thousand four hundred men were firmly attached to him, and could be for the most thoroughly trusted. Equally important, though less numerous, was the splendid regiment of Swiss Guards, of a thousand men, veterans whose prowess the very fiercest of the Jacobins were known to hold in dread; there was also a small body of heavy cavalry of the Gendarmerie, whose fidelity also was believed to be certain, and one or two batteries of artillery, though the good

disposition, or at least the steadiness, of the artillery men was less to be relied on.

Altogether, nearly four thousand men were available for the defence of the palace ; a force, if well equipped and well led, not inadequate to the task of holding it for some time against any number of undisciplined assailants. But they were not well armed. The National Guard were almost destitute of ammunition ; and Pétion, who seemed as if he had repented of the show which he had made, slight as it was, of discountenancing the former insurrection, refused Mandat the necessary supply of cartridges, though some companies of his brigade had but one or two rounds left. Still less were they well led, for at such a crisis everything depended on the King's example, and Louis was utterly wanting to himself.

Throughout the whole evening the entire city was in agitation such as no previous occurrence of the Revolution had excited: it was felt that the decisive crisis was at hand. There is no doubt that the vast majority of the citizens wished well to the cause of royalty and order, but they were irresolute and timorous ; and with a selfish apathy allowed the fate of the monarchy and the nation

to be decided by the violence of men who, though but a small fraction of the population, were strong in their unscrupulousness and decision. The organisers of the riot had got possession of all the churches : and, as the hour of midnight struck, a single cannon-shot gave the signal which all were awaiting, and from every steeple and tower the fatal tocsin began to peal. The insurrection was begun.

The very first measures of the insurgents were dictated by a craft which contributed greatly to their success. The different wards or sections of the city declared themselves in insurrection, and added a number of commissioners to the Municipal Council. And the Council, thus augmented, sent an order in Pétion's name to M. Mandat to repair to the Guildhall in order to give his aid to the concerting of measures necessary for the safety of the city. He was instantly murdered : and the news of his death seemed to Marie Antoinette the knell of all her hopes.

She could hardly doubt that the steadiness of his brigade, in which had been her chief trust, had been greatly owing to its attachment to him, and that his loss was a shock to the loyalty of

many among his followers which it could hardly withstand. She could do nothing herself; but, as a last resource, she persuaded Louis to go down to the courtyard and review the whole body, trusting that his presence might animate the faithful, and perhaps give constancy to the waverers. Louis consented, as he would have consented to any course which was recommended to him; but, on such occasions, more depends on the grace and spirit with which a thing is done than on the act itself, and grace and spirit were now less than ever to be looked for in the unhappy Louis. The despair which was in his heart was shown by the very dress which he had put on that morning, which was a suit of plain violet, such as was never worn by Kings of France except on occasions of mourning.

He visited the different posts. At some the soldiers did at first greet him with a loyal shout. But presently some companies mingled with their cheers cries of "Vive la nation!" while from individual soldiers were heard cries of insult and downright treason: "Death to the priests!" "Down with Veto!" Both cheers and insults the hapless monarch received with equal apathy.

It was to no purpose that his brave-hearted consort put a sword into his hand and exhorted him to take the command of the troops himself, and to show himself ready to fight in person for his crown. It was only once or twice that he could even be brought to utter a few words of acknowledgment to those who treated him with respect : or of expostulation to those who insulted and threatened him ; and presently, pale, and, as it seemed, exhausted with even that slight effort, he returned to his apartment.

Marie Antoinette was in despair. As she said to her ladies, she felt that all was lost : the King, she said, had shown no energy, and such a review had done rather harm than good. All that could be done now was for her to show herself not wanting to the occasion, nor to him. Her courage rose with the imminence of the danger. Those who beheld her as, with dilating eye and heightened colour, she listened to the increasing tumult, and, repressing every appearance of alarm, striving with unabated vigour to rouse her husband, and to fortify the good disposition of the loyal friends around her, have described in terms of enthusiastic admiration the majestic dignity of her demeanour at the trying moment.

She had need of all her presence of mind, for even among those who were most faithful to her dissensions were springing up. At the first alarm Marshal de Mailly and his gallant company of nobles and gentlemen had hastened to her side; but the soldiers of the National Guard were jealous of them. It seemed as if they proposed to remain closest to the royal person; and the soldiers disdained to yield the post of honour to men who were not in uniform, and whom, as they were mostly in court dress, they even regarded with suspicion as aristocrats.

They besought the Queen to dismiss them. "Never," she replied. And trusting rather that the example of their self-sacrificing loyalty might stimulate those who thus complained: and full of that royal magnanimity which feels that it confers honour on those whom it trusts, and that it has a right to look for the loyalty of its servants even to the death, she added, "They will serve with you and share your dangers. They will fight with you in the van; in the rear; where you will. They will show you how men can die for their king."

Had the King been like, her the result of the

day might have been very different. But, as he decided it, they were not destined to have even the sad comfort of saving him by their death. His own manifest irresolution had so disheartened even those troops who were well disposed, and so encouraged those who were unfriendly or doubtful, that it soon became plain that the National Guard could not be relied on to resist the multitude of insurgents who were rapidly approaching. And presently some of the few municipal magistrates who were still faithful to the cause of order, but who had found all their efforts vain to preserve the men in the sense of their duty, sought Louis, to represent to him that defence was hopeless, and that the last chance of safety for himself, his family, and the monarchy lay in quitting the palace and claiming the protection of the Assembly.

The advice thus given met with a very different reception from those to whom it was chiefly addressed. Marie Antoinette would have preferred being nailed (to quote her own expression) to the walls of the palace, rather than seek so degrading a refuge. She pointed to the soldiers, and would still have trusted herself to the valour

of those who yet remained trustworthy. But Louis, still actuated by the morbid fear of bloodshed, adopted it without hesitation. "Let us go," said he. And Marie Antoinette, who, from the first outset of the Revolution had laid down for herself the rule of never showing the slightest appearance of differing from his decisions, prepared to obey. She asked but one question: Could the magistrates answer for the King's life? They declared that they would answer for it with their own: at least they would die by his side. "Let us go," said Louis, and he moved towards the door.

But there were still others besides the intrepid Queen who thought resistance to the mob not only the more honourable but the safer course: and an officer of one battalion of the National Guard, M. Boscari, who could trust the loyalty of his men, as a good officer never fails to make good soldiers, implored Louis to change his mind. He was confident, he said, that his men and the Swiss Guard would at least be able to clear a way for the Royal Family out of the city; and he entreated permission to do so. But, again, as on all previous occasions, Louis rejected the brave

advice. He pleaded the risk to which it would expose those dearest to him : and he led them to almost certain death in committing them to the Assembly.

The hall in which the Assembly sat looked into one side of the palace gardens : and thither Louis now repaired, escorted by a company of the Swiss Guard and a small detachment of the National Guard who were still faithful to their oaths. Marie Antoinette followed, leading the Dauphin by the hand, the Princess Elizabeth and the little Princess Royal came close behind ; and thus, attended by two or three of the ministers and the Queen's ladies, the royal family left the palace of their ancestors, which but one of them was destined ever to behold again. Their every step was one towards destruction which could never be retraced. Marie Antoinette felt it to be so. And, as she reached the foot of the staircase, she cast restless and anxious glances around, looking perhaps even then for any prospect of succour or of effectual resistance which might present itself. One of the Swiss, with rude fidelity, tried to encourage her. " Fear nothing, madame," said he, " your Majesty is surrounded by honest

citizens." She laid her hand on her heart, "I do fear nothing!" and she passed on without another word.

A vast disorderly mob filled the garden through which they passed, and with savage threats hooted the whole party, but especially the Queen; and pressed on them as they moved, as if with the intention of giving deadly effect to their menacing language. But the soldiers, with disciplined resolution, beat them back, and the whole family was conducted in safety to the hall.

We may spare ourselves the relation of the horrible and shameful scenes which subsequently took place around the palace. How the gallant and faithful Swiss who remained on guard, few as they were, beat back the whole multitude of rioters whom Santerre was leading on to its assault: and how, after they had established their superiority, and their ability even now to save Louis if he would have consented to be saved, they were sacrificed by his strange pertinacity of submission. They were so absolutely masters of the situation that their commander was able to send an aid-de-camp into the Assembly hall to ask the King for orders. His order, the

last he ever gave, was that the whole battalion should lay down their arms and retire to their barracks. "He would not," he said, "that such brave men should die." They knew that in fact he was consigning them to death without honour. But they were loyal to the last. They obeyed their sovereign's command: laid down their arms, and were at once made prisoners, to be murdered in cold blood before night; while their comrades in the garden, who had received no such orders, were only so far happier that they died a soldier's death with arms in their hands. They were too few long to resist the overpowering numbers of the mob. The National Guard, too, and even the mounted gendarmerie, had caught the contagion and turned against them. They fought with a steadiness worthy of their old fame: but, hemmed in on all sides, they fell one after another: Louis, who had refused to let them die for him, having only given them the additional pang of feeling that their death was of no service to him.

Meanwhile, it was soon made evident that protection for their lives was all the safety that the Assembly was inclined to afford the royal family in their hall; Vergniaud, one of the Girondin,

deputies, was president of the day : and, under his guidance the deliberations of the deputies, if deliberations they could be called, where the only contest was who could propose the most insulting resolutions, was a mere series of steps towards their destruction. By one vote the dismissal and impeachment of the ministers was ordered ; by another the Girondin ministers whom Louis had dismissed were replaced in office ; a third ordered the suspension of the royal authority : and the election of a National Convention to decide on the future of the country ; a final order commanded that the whole of the royal family should be removed to an adjacent convent, where a few wretched cells were hastily furnished with camp-beds and a few other necessities of the commonest description. And thither, long after midnight, they were conducted as prisoners.

Yet even in this extremity, Marie Antoinette thought of others rather than of herself. And when the next morning one of her most faithful attendants, Madame Campan, to whom we are indebted for our knowledge of many of these scenes, obtained access to her, the Queen's first words expressed how greatly her own sufferings

were aggravated by the thought that she had involved in them those loyal friends whose attachment had merited a very different recompense.

The contest was terminated. Though in form the recent vote of the Assembly had only pointed to a temporary suspension of the royal authority, no one could doubt that Louis was in fact dethroned. Marie Antoinette, at all events, never deceived herself on that point; and, retaining the opinion which she had expressed when three years before they left Versailles, as to the general fate of deposed monarchs, pronounced that all was over with them. "My poor children," said she, addressing herself to the little Dauphin and his sister, "it is cruel to give up the hope of transmitting to you so noble an inheritance, and to have to say that all is over with ourselves." And when, after a day or two, they were conducted to the Temple, the old fortress and palace of the Knights Templars, which the Assembly had assigned as their abode, she felt that they were led to a prison from which their only release would be by death.

So indeed it proved. But the end was not as speedy as she expected. She had yet many months to go through of misery, absolutely un-

paralleled in the history of human suffering. She was without hope, without even such relief from her thoughts as had been afforded by the excitement of conflict. She had to bear indignities and cruelties more terrible than the keenest bodily tortures: with, what she felt more acutely than any pain of her own, the knowledge of the sufferings of those dearest to her, and the sense that it was their connection with herself which had brought them on them.

From the day of the removal of the King and Queen to the Temple, they were completely cut off from the outer world. They were forbidden to receive letters or newspapers. They were deprived of writing materials. They were not allowed to receive visits from friends, which indeed they would hardly have desired, so certainly would any appearance of interest in their fate have brought those who showed it to destruction. They were even deprived of the attendance of all their servants but two, one a cook, the other Cléry, the King's valet, to whom we are indebted for the greater part of our knowledge of their fate so long as Louis himself was permitted to live; while their keepers and the soldiers who were set to guard them vied

with one another in offering them all, and especially the Queen, the most degrading insults; puffing tobacco smoke in her face; placing their seats in the passage that led to the garden in which she walked, so that she could hardly avoid stumbling over them, writing menacing or indecent sentences on the walls, and not seldom assailing her with direct abuse, calling her the assassin of the people, who, in their turn should soon assassinate her.

Yet even this accumulation of misery did not break down the fortitude of this admirable queen. Though she had no longer hope for herself, she could still hope for others. She could still look forward to the possibility that, when her enemies had wreaked their hate on the King and herself, her children, in whom no one could ever have seen offence, might be restored to liberty. And her one distraction from her sorrow was found in educating them to be worthy of their future fortune, whatever it might be that was reserved for them. A few books were allowed them, and she sought to improve the mind of her daughter, now fourteen years old, by studying with her some of the masterpieces of French literature. But the little Dauphin was too young for such instruction; she could but teach,

him simple lessons of piety ; and it is characteristic of her own constant unselfishness that she taught him, while saying his prayers, never to omit the duty of praying for others, for all who had been kind to him, or whom he had been used to regard with affection ; though even these petitions the poor child was compelled to utter in whispers, lest, if they had been heard by the gaolers or the sentries, they might bring ruin on those whom he thus regarded.

Though she had seemed the principal object of the hatred of both Jacobins and Girondins, she was not their first victim. They may have thought, in their fiendish malice, that to protract her life was to protract her misery. And the first blow fell upon the King, if we should not rather say that to him release was first given. The Convention met on the 21st of September. Its first measure was to abolish royalty and establish a republic. And it was not long before a fresh vote determined that Louis should be brought to trial, though there were not wanting members to argue that such a form of investigation was needless, since the mere fact of having worn a crown was a treason against the people which could only be fitly punished by instant death.

However, a trial was decided on ; and every step in the proceedings was so contrived as to aggravate the sufferings of both husband and wife. At the begining of November the unhappy Louis was separated from his family and removed to a distant part of the fortress, where he was only allowed to see them for a short period of each day. On the 11th of December he was brought before the Convention, and ordered to prepare for his trial. And from that day all intercourse between him and his wife and children was absolutely cut off till, six weeks afterwards, on the morning of the 20th of January, the uproar in the streets announced that he had been condemned to death ; and presently notice was sent to the Queen that he was to die the next morning, and that one last interview with him was all the comfort that was to be granted to either.

From the unutterable agony of that last meeting who would withdraw the veil ? Louis himself never perhaps in his whole career appeared to greater advantage. Ruinously weak and irresolute in action, suffering he could meet with unruffled fortitude and dignity. So far he resembled his wife, that all his thoughts were given

to others, none to himself. When they parted that night she was given to believe that they should meet again in the morning. But, lest a second parting should be beyond her strength to bear, he even denied himself the consolation of a last farewell. And she was waiting in sleepless anxiety for the last summons when she learnt that he had already perished beneath the fatal guillotine, and that she was a widow.

Surely if ever woman abandoned herself to utter despair, Marie Antoinette might now well have renounced all action for the future, all thought except the wish to join her husband in death. But even sorrow such as had fallen on her she would not allow wholly to overwhelm her. She felt that she had still duties to perform to the living, and for her children's sake she was willing even to live. And, as a wish for friendship and sympathy can never be extinct in the human breast, she had the comfort of knowing that a desire to save her life and theirs was not confined to those who had always been her friends, but that even among those whom she had hitherto been forced to rank among her enemies some had been converted to compassion and to a desire to serve her.

So dead to all feelings of decency were the municipal councillors that they refused her an interview with Cléry, the faithful servant who had been with her husband to the last, and seized the ring and seal which Louis had sent her as the last memorial of his love. But one of their commissioners named Toulan, who had particular charge of the royal prisoners, moved by pity or shame at the barbarity of his masters, procured the small trinkets and sent them to her; and, having ventured so much, was led on by the same feelings to venture more, and, in concert with one or two old Royalists and even with another of his brother-commissioners, who, like him, had learnt to abhor the indignities practised on fallen royalty, laid a plan for the escape of the whole family.

But the progress of the war in the Netherlands, where for a time the Austrian army was making successful progress, so increased the vigilance with which the prisoners were watched that Toulan was presently compelled to abandon the hope of effecting the deliverance of any one but the Queen herself. That he had still no doubt that he could effect, and that he regarded as the most important part of his task, since it was plain that it was she who

was in the most immediate danger. And the Princess Elizabeth earnestly besought her to take advantage of his plan, and to leave her and the children, as being less obnoxious to the Revolutionists, to take their chance of some subsequent means of escape; or perhaps even of mercy.

But such a flight was forbidden alike by Marie Antoinette's sense of duty and sense of honour, if, indeed, the two were ever separated in her mind. Honour forbade her to desert her companions in misery, lest their danger might be increased by the rage of her gaolers, exasperated at her escape. Duty to her boy forbade it more emphatically. As his guardian, she ought not to leave him; as his mother, she could not. And she therefore renounced the whole design; dismissing it, to quote the words of the letter in which she informed her friends of her decision, "as a pleasant dream."

A second plan of escape, formed by the Baron de Batz, a nobleman of ancient family, and still animated by all the antique feelings of chivalrous loyalty, though it seemed at first to be still better laid, and to hold out a surer prospect of success, was baffled in a similar manner; and Marie Antoinette, abandoning, as was usual with her,

all thoughts of herself, turned with increased assiduity to the education of her children. Even yet she would not resign the hope that hereafter the nation would recover from its present madness, or that some happier change of fortune might replace her boy on his father's throne; and her chief duty, as she regarded it, was now to render him worthy of such a restoration.

But even of that last hope she was soon deprived. In May, want of air and exercise threw the poor child into a severe illness, in which, with an indecency beyond even their habitual cruelty, the magistrates refused him the services of any physician except the prison doctor. And he had not long recovered when they made him the means of inflicting on his hapless mother a fresh blow, in comparison with which all other inflictions were as nothing. On the evening of the 3rd of July, when the little King was sleeping calmly, his mother having hung a shawl in front of his bed to screen his eyes from the light of the candle by which she and the Princess Elizabeth were mending their clothes, the door of their chamber was thrown violently open, and commissioners from the Municipal Council entered to announce that

the Convention had ordered that the boy should be removed from his mother, and committed to the care of a tutor: the tutor selected being a cobbler named Simon, notorious even among the Revolutionists for a more than ordinary savageness of temper.

At this unexpected blow all Marie Antoinette's fortitude and resignation at last gave way. She wept, she remonstrated, she humbled herself to supplicate mercy. She threw her arms round her child, and declared that force itself should not tear him from her. The commissioners were not men to show or to feel pity. They abused her; they threatened her. She begged them rather to kill her than to take her son. They would not kill her, but they swore that they would murder both him and her daughter before her eyes if he were not at once surrendered. There was no more resistance. His aunt and sister took him from the bed and dressed him. His mother, with a voice choked with her sobs, addressed him with the last words he was ever to hear from her: "My child, they are taking you from me. Never forget the mother who loves you tenderly, and never forget God. Be good, gentle, and honest, and

your father will look down on you from heaven, and will bless you." The commissioners, with fresh abuse, dragged him away; but she heard and saw no more. She had fainted. Nothing could touch her further.

She had never doubted that her enemies would put her to death, as they had put her husband. But it was a singular proof of the bitterness of personal hatred with which they regarded her, born probably of the awe with which, in spite of themselves, her lofty courage and dignity struck them, that, when they had resolved on her destruction, they did not leave her in the Temple, as they had left Louis, but removed her to the common prison, hoping, it may be, by that additional degradation to break her spirit more, and wring from her some token of weakness, when they should produce her before their tribunal.

Within a month after the removal of her boy another body of commissioners carried her off in the same manner; allowing her but the briefest space of time to say a few words of farewell to her sister and daughter, who begged in vain to be allowed to accompany her. She delayed them by no remonstrances or entreaties now. She knew

that she was going to her doom, which she could not but look upon as a release. But the end was still delayed, from the impossibility of devising any charge against her which should not be utterly absurd. And it was not till the middle of October that, having at last contrived to frame an indictment to their satisfaction, they brought her before the Revolutionary Tribunal, the most infamous court that has ever profaned the name of justice.

Their indictment refused her the title of queen. In the preceding year some antiquaries had traced her husband's descent back to Hugh Capet, the supplanter of the Carlovingian dynasty, and "the Widow Capet" was now the designation under which she was brought before the judges.

It was not without reason that her destroyers had dreaded the effect which her appearance might produce. All the misery of the last four years, the solitary dungeon in which she had lingered for the last three months, even the heaviest blow of all, the separation from her son, had been powerless to subdue her noble courage, supported as it was by her consciousness of innocence. Clad in deep mourning, and aged beyond her years by her long series of sorrows, she still preserved the fearless, serene

dignity which became her race and rank and character.

As she took her place at the bar, and cast her eyes around the hall, even the spectators who thronged the court, callous and debased, as they were, were impressed by her lofty demeanour. "How proud she is," was their comment. The only sign of nervousness which she gave being, as those who watched her closely remarked, that she moved her fingers up and down the arm of her chair as if she had been playing on the harpsichord.

The indictment was so preposterous in all its particulars; one count charging her with having caused scarcity and famine; another with having corresponded with her own brother the emperor; while a third imputed it to her as a crime that she had desired the re-establishment of the monarchy, and the peroration compared her to Messalina, Brunehaut, Catharine de Medici, to all the wickedest women of whom ancient or modern history had preserved a record; that had she been guided by her own feelings alone, she would have disdained to reply to them at all.

But still, as ever, she thought of her child, of

her fair and good son, her "gentle infant," as in happier days she had been wont to call him. While life lasted she could never wholly relinquish the hope that she might see him once again; perhaps even that some unexpected chance might restore him and her to freedom, and him to his throne; and for his sake she resolved to exert herself to refute the charge brought against her, and at least to establish her right to acquittal and deliverance.

To refute the charges was easy, but before such a tribunal it signified nothing what was proved or disproved. It was late at night, on the 15th of October, before the trial was concluded; sentence of death was instantly pronounced, and was ordered to be executed the next morning.

She was taken back to her cell. Even in the last hours of her life she was not permitted one visit from her children, a favour never before denied to the very vilest criminals; the only indulgence which she could obtain being the use of writing materials. And in a last letter she bade them and her sister-in-law farewell; a letter which, in every sentence, displays the affectionate humanity, the humble piety, and the lofty courage which had inspired her whole life. Her last injunction to her son entreats him "never to for-

get the last words of his father : never to seek to avenge his and her death."

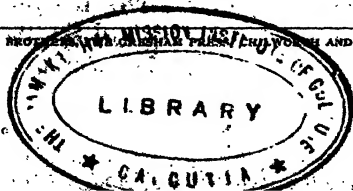
Utterly exhausted she threw herself on her bed and fell asleep. At seven in the morning she was roused by the executioners. The streets were already thronged by a fierce and sanguinary mob ; and, in their untiring malice, the Jacobin leaders had ordered that, instead of a carriage such as had been afforded to Louis, she should be drawn to the scaffold in a common cart, seated on a bare plank, the executioner at her side holding the cords with which her hands were already bound. With a refinement of cruelty they even caused the procession to halt more than once on its way that the people might gaze upon her, while those who headed it pointed her out to the mob with words and gestures of the vilest insult. She heard them not : her thoughts were with God. Her lips were uttering nothing but prayers. Once for a moment, as she passed in sight of the Tuileries, she was observed to cast an agonised look towards its towers, remembering perhaps with what sad forebodings she had quitted them fourteen months before. It was midday before the cart reached the scaffold. As she descended she trod on the executioner's foot. It might seem to have been

ordained that her last words should be words of courtesy,—“Excuse me, sir,” she said; “I did not do it on purpose.” And she added, “Make haste.” In a few moments all was over.

So unappeasable was their malignity, that her murderers warred even with her ashes. Christian burial was granted to none of their victims. But a new and especial insult was devised for her, and her body, after being thrown into a pit in the common cemetery, was covered with quicklime to ensure its entire destruction. That indeed her murderers could consume. But they could never destroy her fame as that one of the purest, bravest, and noblest of her sex, who, while, in prosperity, was the pattern of every grace and every virtue; and who, when the hour of adversity came, bore, for years together, a series of miseries such as no other woman has ever been exposed to, with an unflinching fortitude and a serene dignity of which the history of the world does not afford a brighter example.

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